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THE END OF THE WORLD

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ILLUSTRATED BY H. LANOS

MARS is signalling a dark star."

The world to which this news was flashed from the Central Observatory on the Himalayas had long been dull and stagnant. Almost every scientific discovery had been made thousands of years before, and the inventions for their application had been so perfected that it seemed as if no real improvement could be made in them. Methods of conducting human affairs had been brought into such good shape that everything went on as by machinery. Successive Defenders of the Peace of the World had built up a code of international law so complete that every question at issue between nations was settled by its principles. The only history of great interest was that of a savage time, lying far back in the mists of antiquity, when men fought and killed each other in war. The daily newspapers chronicled little but births, marriages, deaths, and the weather reports. They would not publish what was not worth talking about, and a subscriber often found at his door a paper containing little more than the simple announcement, on an otherwise blank page — "Nothing worthy of note has happened since our last issue." Only one language was spoken the world over, and all gentlemen dined in blue coats with gilt buttons, and wore white neckties with red borders. Even China, the most distant nation of all, had fallen into line several thousand years before, and lived like the rest of the world.

To find a time of real excitement it was necessary to go back 3,000 years, when messages had first been successfully interchanged with the inhabitants of Mars. To send a signal which they could see required a square mile of concentrated light as bright as the sun, and experiments extending through thousands of years had been necessary before this result could be brought about by any manageable apparatus. Signals from the plains of Siberia had been made nightly during two or three oppositions of the planet, without any answer being received. Then the world was electrified by hearing that return signals could be seen flashing in such a way that no doubt could exist about them. Their interpretation required more study than was ever expended by our archæologists on a Moabite inscription. When success was at last reached, it became evident by a careful comparison of the records that the people of Mars were more successful watchers of the stars than we were ourselves. It was found that a row of four lights diminishing in intensity from one end to the other, and pointing in one direction, meant that a new star was showing itself in that direction. Some object of this sort had been seen every two or three years from the earliest historical times, but in recent times a star had often been signaled from Mars before even the sensitive photographic plates and keen eyes of our Himalayan astronomers had discerned it.

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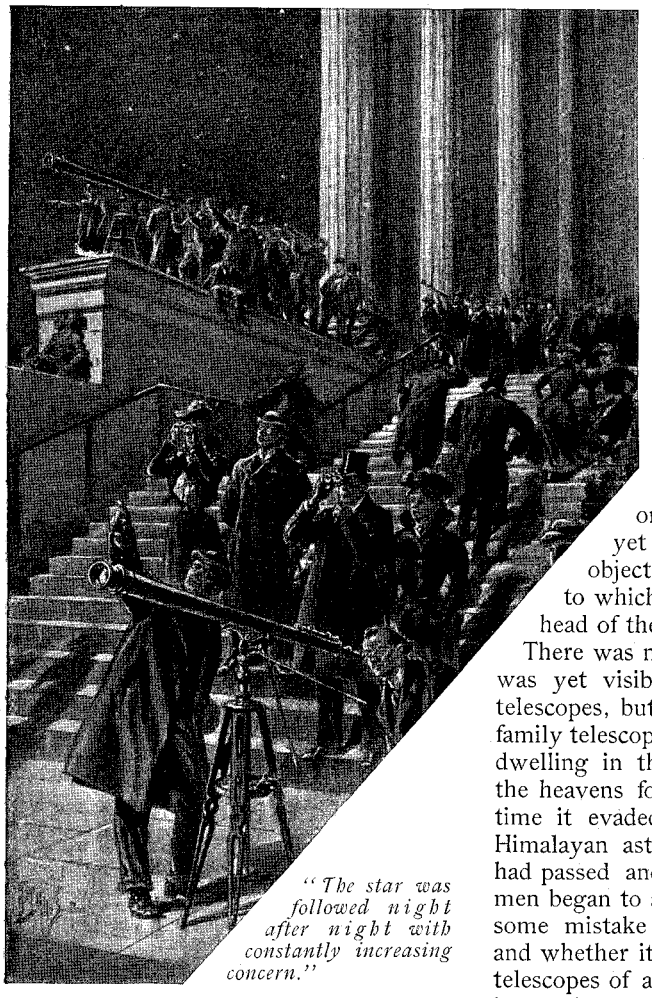

"The star was followed night after night with constantly increasing concern."

Ordinary comets were plentiful enough. More than 25,000 had been recorded, and the number was still increasing every year. But dark stars were so rare that not one had appeared for three centuries, and only about twenty had been recorded in astronomical history. They differed from comets in not belonging to the solar system, but coming from far distant regions among the stars, and in being comparatively dark in color, with very short tails, or perhaps none at all. They were found to be dark bodies whose origin and destination were alike unknown, each pursuing its own way through the immeasurable abysses of space. It had been found that a certain arrangement of five lights in the form of a cross on the planet meant that one of these bodies was flying through or past our system, and the head of the cross showed the direction in which it was to be looked for.

After a dozen generations of men had passed away without seeing a body of this kind, it goes without saying that the news from Mars of a coming dark star excited universal interest. Where is it? What does it mean? What is a dark star? The Himalayan astronomers were nearly buried under telegrams asking these and other questions without numbers. They could only reply that they had not yet succeeded in finding the object, but that the constellation to which the signal pointed was the head of the Dragon.

There was no likelihood that the object was yet visible, even through powerful telescopes, but this did not prevent the family telescope being brought out in every dwelling in the world, in order to scour the heavens for the new star. For some time it evaded the scrutiny even of the Himalayan astronomers. When a week had passed and it had not been sighted, men began to ask whether there was not some mistake in interpreting the signal, and whether it could be possible that the telescopes of another planet were as much better than ours as this failure would seem to indicate. The conviction began to gain ground that the signal had been misinterpreted, and that there was no dark star or anything else unusual coming. But when interest in the subject had about died away, it was suddenly renewed by the announcement that the object had been photographed very near where the signals had indicated it. It was about half-way between the head of the Dragon and the constellation Lyra, moving very slowly toward the East and South.

The problem now was to determine the orbit of the new star, and for this purpose the astronomers began to make the most accurate observations possible. Owing to the slowness of the motion, several days, perhaps two weeks would be required. While waiting for more news curiosity was excited by a new announcement:

"Mars appears to be in a state of extraor-

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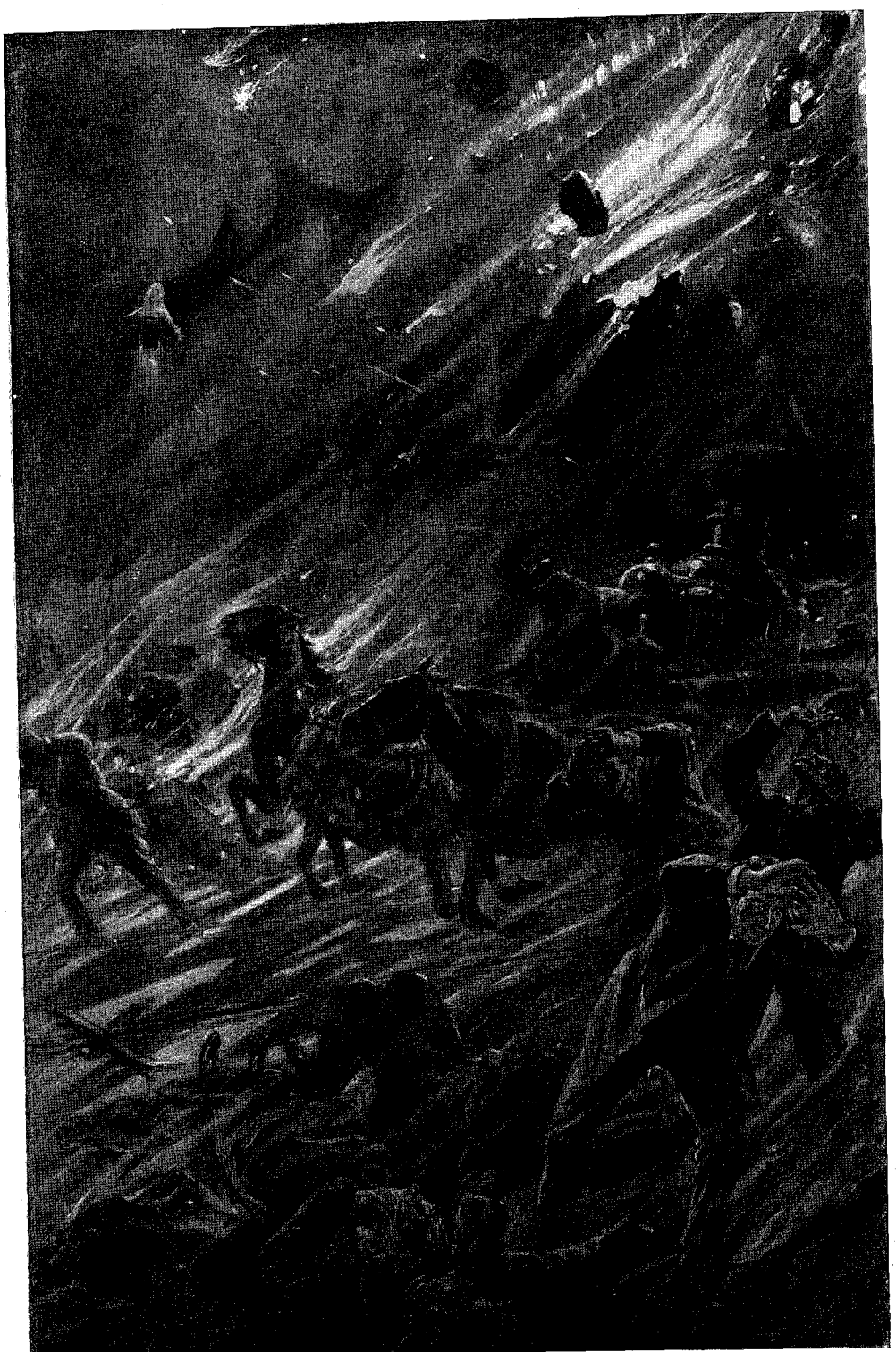

"Everything combustible . . . burst into flame, stones were crumbled by the heat, towers and steeples fell as if shaken by an earthquake."

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dinary excitement. The five signal lights which have been seen from time to time ever since the dark star appeared are flashing in a way never before recorded. We cannot imagine what it means."

Our world could only ask: "What can it mean?" and wait patiently.

The astronomers were much puzzled about the orbit, and a month passed before they could reach a decision on the subject. Then Himalaya sent out an announcement more startling than any that had preceded it:

"The dark star has no orbit. It is falling straight toward the sun with a speed that has already reached 30 kilometers a second, and which is continually increasing as it falls. It will reach the sun in about 210 days.'

The first man to see the possibilities suggested by this announcement was the Professor of Physics. Although all the scientific discoveries had probably been made, a single great physical laboratory had been established in which experiments were conducted with a faint hope of something new being learned. The laboratory was placed near the southern end of a peninsula, the site of one of the greatest cities of the ancient world, known as Neeork, the ruins of which, buried ages before by an earthquake, were known to extend over many square miles. To the north now stood the city of Hattan, the mighty city of the world, whose well-paved streets, massive buildings, public institutions, and lofty towers extended a day's journey to the north and west, whose wealth was fabulous, and whose sights every man in the world wanted to see at least once during his lifetime. Most of the investigations to which the laboratory was devoted had to be carried on where the temperature was the same from one year's end to another. To bring about this result an immense vault hundreds of yards in extent had been excavated at a depth of more than a hundred feet under the ground. Here was stored what one might suppose to be every piece of apparatus that human ingenuity had invented for making physical researches, and every instrument that men could make use of.

Of course the Professor of Physics, like all the rest of the world, heard that a dark star was going to fall into the sun. His proceedings after this announcement would have excited curiosity had it not been that the thoughts of men were too much occupied with the celestial visitor to notice his doings. He proceeded to supplement his immense stock of physical apparatus by a kind of supplies never before known to form the outfit of a laboratory. These consisted of flour, fresh wheat, edibles of every kind, and a supply of the seeds of almost every plant known to Botany. The few people who noticed what he was doing gave the subject no attention, supposing that he was merely extending his experiments into the vegetable kingdom. Having got his supplies all stored away, he called his assistants around him.

"I have something to say to you, and the first condition I impose is that it must be kept an absolute secret. Those who are not willing to pledge themselves to secrecy will please retire."

None retired.

"Will you all hold up your right hands in evidence of your adherence to the pledge which I exact from you?"

All did so.

"Now let me tell you what none but ourselves must hear. You all know that from the beginning of recorded history stars supposed to be new have from time to time blazed out in the heavens. The scientific men know that these stars were not really new. They were simply commonplace stars which, through the action of some cause that no one has yet brought to light, suddenly increased their heat and light thousands of times. Then, in the course of a few months, they faded away into their former insignificance, or rather, perhaps, turned into nebulæ.

"We have also known that dark bodies many times larger than the earth are flying through space like the stars themselves. Now, my theory is that if one of these objects chances to strike a star it bursts through its outer envelope and sets free the enormous fires pent up within, which burst forth in all their fury.

"Next December one of these objects is going to fall into our sun. Now I do not want to frighten you unnecessarily, but I think we may as well look this matter in the face. If my theory is correct, the light and heat of the sun will be suddenly increased thousands of times. Should this result follow, can there be any doubt as to the consequences? The whole surface

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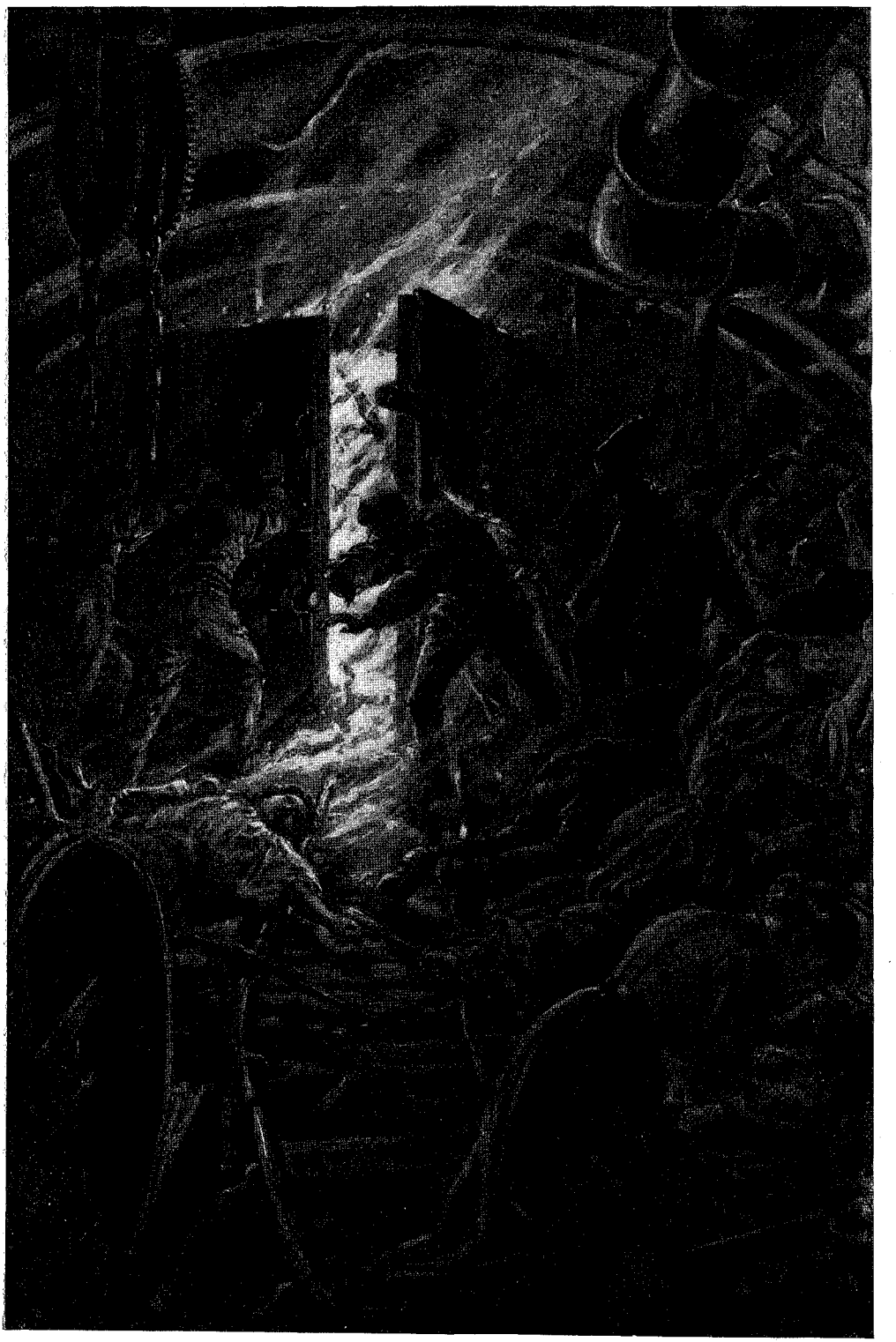

" Crowded together in the confusion of despair."

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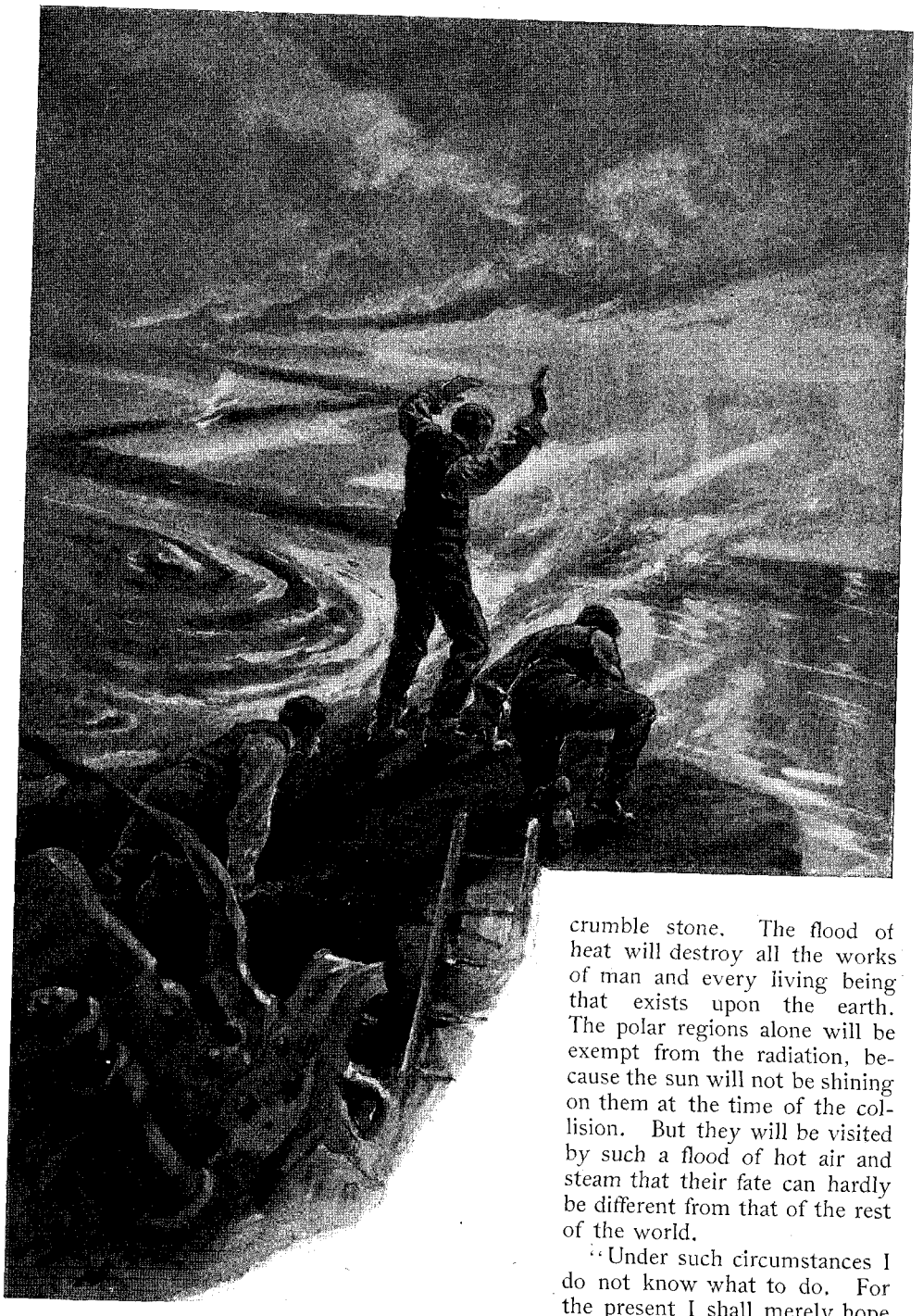

"Vainly their eyes looked for the great city."

of the earth will be exposed to a radiation as intense as that in the focus of a burning glass, which, you all know, will not only set fire to wood, but melt iron and crumble stone. The flood of heat will destroy all the works of man and every living being that exists upon the earth. The polar regions alone will be exempt from the radiation, because the sun will not be shining on them at the time of the collision. But they will be visited by such a flood of hot air and steam that their fate can hardly be different from that of the rest of the world.

"Under such circumstances I do not know what to do. For the present I shall merely hope that my theory is all wrong. At the same time I invite you to be in readiness to bring your wives and families here at the critical moment, so that we can all take refuge in our vaults. If nothing occurs, well and good. Nobody

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need know what we have planned. It is not likely that we shall feel it worth while to live if the rest of the world is destroyed. But we cannot decide that question until we face it. Keep in readiness and say nothing, that is all I have to advise for the present."

During the month that followed the Professor was very much perplexed as to whether he should make his fears known. Against doing this was the consideration that the world could not help itself, and it had better go on to the last moment in ignorance of what was coming. Physicians make it a point of honor not to inform their patient that he has a fatal illness, why should the race be apprised of its inevitable doom? The mental suffering endured in the mean time would be useless, no matter whether they were saved or lost. Why make them suffer to no purpose?

But, in spite of this reticence on his part, the world was much concerned, especially by the signals from Mars. These, instead of ceasing as always before, after one or two nights, now flashed out incessantly night after night. The Martians must be trying to tell us something of unprecedented importance. What could it be? The Professor of Physics was loudly called upon to know if there was not really some danger from the dark comet falling into the sun. The calls became so pressing that he was forced to make some sort of a reply.

"While it is impossible to state with certainty the effect that will be produced by the fall of the dark star into the sun, it is only right to say that it may possibly be followed by an increase in the sun's radiation, which will have reached its height in two or three days, and may continue abnormally great for some weeks. It will therefore be prudent to guard against the possible consequences of an increase in the sun's heat. The roofs of houses, and all combustible objects exposed to the sun's rays, should, as far as possible, be protected by a non-combustible covering. Food and clothing liable to be injured by the heat should be protected by being stored in cellars."

The Professor of Logic in the University of Hattan put all the data bearing on the subject into equations which he proceeded to solve, and then announced his judgment on the view of the Professor of Physics.

"Ten thousand years of recorded experience has led to the conclusion that the sun is one of the most stable bodies in the universe. During all the years through which meteorological records have extended there has not been a change of a single degree in the annual amount of heat radiated to the earth. In favor of the view that a sudden change will be produced by any cause whatever we have only a doubtful physical theory, sustained by no experience whatever. It is, therefore, not logical to be frightened by the prediction of the Professor of Physics, especially when he is himself in doubt about the correctness of his own view. Yet, in view of the magnitude of the interests involved, the prudence of the suggestion made by the Professor cannot be questioned. No harm can be done by taking every possible precaution."

A torrent of dispatches now poured down upon the Professor of Physics from every part of the world wanting to know whether his mathematical theory of the case was really well grounded. After all, was not the Professor of Logic right, and was it not unreasonable to suppose that an order of things which had continued, probably, for millions of years should be so suddenly changed? He could only reply that his theory had never been verified in any known case. He was glad to find his view in doubt. The main fact on which it was based—that the new stars which blazed up every few years were not new, but old stars which had suddenly burst out from some inscrutable cause—he purposely kept in the background.

While this discussion was going on, the terrible object which was darting toward our sun remained for some time invisible in every telescope but the great one of the Himalayas. In a few weeks, however, growing brighter as it came nearer the sun, it could be seen in smaller and smaller telescopes, and at last was clearly made out by every watcher of the heavens. Two months before its occurrence the time of the catastrophe was predicted to a minute by the Himalayan astronomers. It would be in the afternoon of December 12th, after the sun had set in Europe, and while it was still shining on all but the northeastern portion of the American continent and on most of the Pacific Ocean. The sun would have set to regions as far east as Labrador,

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and would be about an hour high on the middle portions of the Atlantic coast. The star was followed night after night with constantly increasing concern. As each evening approached, men indulged in a vain hope that the black star might prove a phantom — some ghost of the sky which would disappear never again to be seen. But this impression was always dispelled when night came on, and the telescope was pointed. The idea of an illusion vanished entirely when the object became visible to the naked eye, and was seen night after night without any telescope at all.

Every night it was a very little brighter than the night before. Yet there was nothing in the object itself that would excite alarm. Even in the most superstitious age of the world people might never have noticed it, or, if they had, would only have wondered how the star happened to be there when it had not before been seen. Now, however, the very slowness of the increase inflicted a slow torture upon the whole human race, like that experienced by a Chinese prisoner whose shaved head is made to feel the slow dropping of water. What is hardly noticeable at first gets farther and farther beyond the limit of endurance. The slowness with which the light of the star increased only lengthened the torture. Men could scarcely pursue their daily vocations. Notes went to protest on a scale that threatened universal bankruptcy. When December approached it was seen that the fall toward the sun was becoming more rapid, and that the increase in brightness was going on at a greater and still greater rate. Formerly the star had been seen only at night. Now the weird object, constantly growing larger, could be seen in full daylight, like some dragon in the sky.

As December approached the thoughts and sentiments of their remote ancestors, which had been absent for untold ages, were revived in the minds of men. They had long worshipped the invisible, beneficent, and all-pervading Power which informed the universe and breathed into its atoms the breath of life. Now this power became a remorseless Judge, about to punish the men of the present for the sins of ancestors during all time.

December forced its way in, and now the days were counted. Eleven days — ten — to-morrow nine only will elapse before the fate of the world will be decided. It required nerve to face the star; men shut their eyes to it, as if the unseen were nonexistent. Those who dared to point the telescope saw it look as large as the moon to the naked eye. But the mild and serene aspect of our satellite was not there — only a fierce glow, as that of the eye of a beast of prey.

Seven days — six days — five days — fiercer glowed the eye which in waking hours belonged to a being breathing naught but vengeance. Even in sleep men still in imagination saw the eye and felt such terrors as might be inspired by the chase of malignant and pitiless demons of the bottomless pit. They lived over again the lives of their ancestors who had been chased by wild beasts.

Three days — two days — reason began to leave its seat. The insane rushed madly about, but the guardians of the peace heeded them not. In the streets men glared into each other's eyes, but no word was necessary to express the thought.

The last day dawns: to-night — what? Calm and still was the morning; mildly as ever shone the sun, all unconscious of the enemy ready to strike him. His unconcern seemed to calm the minds of men, as if he meant to assure them that nothing was to happen. They plucked up courage to look with eye and telescope. The sun, unmoved as ever, advanced toward the West, the hours were counted — now the minutes.

At every telescope some watcher found the nerve to see what would happen. Every minute the malignant eye grew brighter and glared more fiercely; every minute it could be seen nearer the sun. A shudder spread over the whole city of Hattan as the object seemed to touch the sun's disc. A moment of relief followed when it disappeared without giving any sign. Perhaps, under the fervent heat of the sun, the star had dissolved into the air. But this hope was speedily dashed by its reappearance as a black spot on the sun, slowly passing along its face. Those who considered the case now knew that we were merely looking at the object as seen betweeen us and the sun, and that it had not yet fallen into the latter. For a moment there was a vague hope that the computations of the astronomers had, for the first time in history, led them astray, and that the black object would continue its course

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over the sun, to leave it again like the planet Mercury or Venus during a transit. But this illusion was dispelled when the dark object disappeared in a moment and its place was taken by an effulgence of such intensity that, notwithstanding the darkness of the glass through which the sun was being viewed, the eyes of the lookers-on were dazzled with the brightness.

No telescope was necessary to see what followed. Looking with the naked eye through a dark-glass a spot many times brighter than the rest of the sun was seen where the black object had just disappeared. Every minute it grew larger and brighter. In half an hour this effulgence, continually increasing and extending, was seen to project away from the sun like a fan or the tail of a comet. An unearthly glow spread over the whole landscape, in the light of which pebbles glistened like diamonds. By the time the sun had set to the Eastern States its size seemed to be doubled and its brightness to have increased fourfold. Before it set on the Pacific coast the light and heat became so intense that every one had to seek the shade.

The setting of the sun afforded a respite for the night. But no sooner had it grown dark than a portentous result was seen in the heavens. It happened that Mars, in opposition, had just risen in the East, while Venus, as the evening star, was seen in the West. These objects both glowed — Venus like an electric light, Mars like a burning coal. Every one knew the cause. Shining by the reflected light of the sun, their brightness increased in the same proportion as the sunlight. It was like seeing a landscape by the light of some invisible conflagration. Its very suggestiveness added a new terror. The beholders could imagine what results were being produced on other continents by the rapidly increasing conflagration, and awaited in calm despair the result when our central luminary should again come around to our longitude.

The earth, continuing its revolution, exposed the oceans and continents in succession to the burning rays. When the sun set at San Francisco the heat was still not unbearable. But from Asia and Europe came the most portentous news through the period of what, for them, was day, while on the American continent it was night. In China and India men could only remain out of doors a few minutes at a time. In the afternoon all had to flee from the heat and take refuge in their houses.

Yet worse was the case in Europe. For a time detailed dispatches came from London. The telegraph offices had all been removed to the cellars of the buildings in which they were located, and men were trying to store everything combustible where the sun's rays could not reach it. Every fire-engine in the city was called out to sprinkle the roofs of the houses. Notwithstanding these precautions, at eleven o'clock a roof in Cheapside took fire, and soon after fires broke out here and there in nearly every quarter. By noon the whole city seemed to be in flames, the firemen fighting heat above them and around them. It would soon become impossible for a human being to live in the streets.

A few minutes later came the news that sudden relief had been experienced. A violent gale came in from the Atlantic, bringing with it a torrent of rain, which, for the time being, extinguished the flames. But a new horror was now added. The wind increased to a hurricane of unexampled force. Houses were everywhere blown down and roofs were flying in mid-air, exposing everything in the interior to the flood of water.

About 3 P. M. it was announced that the sun, having dissolved the clouds with its fervent heat, had again shone forth hotter than ever, and that the telegraph offices would soon have to be abandoned. Not another word was heard from the European side until night. Then it was announced that the heat had again been followed by a torrent of rain, and that, the sun having set, another respite had been obtained. The damage done was incalculable and the loss of life frightful, yet hope would have survived had it not been for what might be expected on the morrow.

The American continent, forewarned, undertook the most vigorous defense possible. Before the sun rose every fire-engine in Hattan was in place ready for action. Everything combustible in the city was covered with woolen cloth and sprinkled with water. The possibility of doing something occcupied all minds, and after the sun rose men fought the heat with the courage of despair. Fiercely

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though the sun poured down its flood of fire, an engine was ready to extinguish the flames wherever they burst forth. As in Europe, they were soon aided by floods of rain. Thus passed the day, while the sun shed a fiercer heat with every passing hour.

The scene while the sun was setting filled all minds with despair. The size of our luminary was multiplied so many times that it was an hour after the lower edge touched the horizon before the upper edge had set. When it finally disappeared the place of twilight was taken by a lurid illumination of the whole heavens, which still left the evening brighter than an ordinary day. Cosmic flames millions of miles in extent, rising from the sun, still appeared above the horizon from time to time. Even at midnight a sort of aurora, tenfold brighter than any that had ever been recorded, seemed to spread over the sky in rising sheets of fiery vapor, which disappeared at the zenith. The trained eye of the Professor of Physics watched the scene from the iron door of his vault. He knew the cause. The exploded sun was sending forth its ions with a velocity almost comparable with that of light to every part of the solar system. In the midst of the illumination the planet Mars could still be seen glowing with supernatural brightness, but no word came from the Himalayan Observatory as to any signals it might be sending to us. Communication from other continents had entirely ceased, and the inhabitants of the whole American continent awaited the coming of what they knew must be the last day.

After midnight, although the ions were flying thicker than ever, a supernatural light seemed to spread over the landscape. The very contrast to what was expected to come in the morning added to the depression and terror. If any vain hope was entertained that the sun might, during its course over the Pacific Ocean and Asia, abate some of its fiery stream, it was dispelled when, shortly after three o'clock, the first sign of the approaching luminary was seen in the East. Still thicker the ions flew, as a bright radiance, far exceeding that of the evening before, heralded the approach of what had always been considered the great luminary, but was now the great engine of destruction. Brighter and brighter grew the eastern horizon, until, long before the actual sun appeared above it, the eye could no longer endure the dazzling blaze. When, an hour later, the sun itself appeared, its rays struck the continent like a fiery flood. As they advanced from the Atlantic to the Pacific everything combustible which they struck burst into flame, stones were crumbled by the heat, towers and steeples fell as if shaken by an earthquake. Men had to take refuge in caves or cellars or beneath any covering which could protect them from the fierce heat. Old and young, rich and poor, male and female, crowded together in the confusion of despair. The great magnates of commerce and industry, whose names were everywhere familiar as household words, on whose wealth and power all the millions that inhabited the continent had looked with envy or admiration, were now huddled with their liveried servants beneath the ruins of falling houses, in the cellars of their own homes, in the vaults of their banks, or under any shelter which could protect them from the burning of a thousand sins.

The Professor of Physics, with his assistants, could only look through a crevice in the covering of his vault and see the fiery radiance which was coming from the East. When the covering grew so hot that he felt refuge must soon be taken in the lowest vaults, the sun was suddenly cut off by a rising cloud of blackness coming in from the Atlantic. The whole ocean was boiling like a pot, and the rising steam was carried over the land by a gale produced by the expansion of the air over the ocean. Moving with inconceivable velocity, the gale passed over the continent, sweeping before it every vestige of human work that stood in its path. Even the stones of the buildings, cracked and pulverized by the heat, were now blown through the air like dust, and, churned with the rain, buried the land under a torrent of mud. The lightning played incessantly everywhere, and, if it did not destroy every being exposed to it, it was only because no living beings survived where it struck. Constantly thickening and darkening clouds poured down their storm of rain upon the ruins. But no relief was thus afforded to the mass of cringing humanity which remained protected in vaults and cellars. The falling flood was boiling hot, scalding to death every one upon whom it fell. It

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poured through cracks and crevices, flooding cellars, saturating the ruins of buildings, and if a living being remained it scalded him to death

The Professor and his official family were, for the time being, saved from destruction by the construction of their subterranean chambers. The heat and the wind had effaced every structure at the mouth of the cave, and driven them into the lowest recess of their vaults. Against the iron doors which walled them in the flood pressed like the water against the compartments of a ship riven in two by a collision. The doors burned the hand that touched them, but the boiling water leaked through only in small streams.

The few survivors of the human race here huddled together could only envy their more fortunate fellow-men who, in the sleep of death, had escaped such an imprisonment as they now suffered. Had the question of continuing to survive been put to a vote, all would have answered it in the negative. Hope was gone, and speedy death was the best that could be prayed for. Only the conscience which had been implanted in the race through long ages prohibited their taking their own lives They had provisions for two years, and might, therefore, survive during that period, if the supply of air and oxygen should hold out. For producing the latter both material and apparatus existed in the vaults. The reflection that such was the case was painful rather than pleasurable. While they did not have the nerve to let themselves be smothered to death, they felt that the devices for prolonging their lives, to which instinct compelled them to resort, could only be the means of continuing their torture. Electric light they had in abundance, but by day or night nothing could be done. They were in the regions of eternal night, except when they chose to turn on the current. From time to time one or another, moved more by the necessity of doing something than by any real object examined the doors of the cave to see what changes might have taken place in the pressure of the water against them. Long after the latter had ceased to trickle through the cracks the doors continued hot, but as time passed — they could not say whether days, weeks, or months — they found the doors growing cooler.

They at length ventured to open them. A sea of mud, knee-deep, but not quite at a scalding temperature, was found in the passages outside of them. Through this they were at length able to wade, and in time made their way to the open air. Emerging, it was impossible to say whether it was day or night. The illumination was brighter than anything ever known in the brightest day, yet no sun could be seen in the sky. The latter seemed filled with a nebulous mass of light, through and over which the clouds of ions were still streaming like waves of fire. The temperature was barely endurable, but it was no worse than the stifling closeness of their subterranean abode.

The first effect of the outer air was to produce an impression as of waking from a dream. But a glance over the landscape dispelled this impression in a moment. What they saw must be reality, though awful beyond conception. Vainly their eyes looked for the great city. No city, not even a ruin was there. They longed in vain for human help; not an animated being was in sight. Every vestige of man and his works — it might even be said every vestige of the work of Nature was gone. On three sides were what seemed great rivers of slime, while, toward the North, the region which had swarmed with the life and activity of the great world-center was a flat surface of dried clay, black sand, or steaming mud, in which not even an insect crawled. In the thick and vaporous air not a bird warbled its note. To return to their dungeons was like a prisoner returning to his cell. Farther they must go in a search for some familiar object or some sign of humanity. Is there no telegraph to send a word of news? No railway on which a train may run? No plow with which the furrow may be turned? No field in which wheat can be sown? These questions were asked in silence; had they been asked aloud not even an echo would have answered. When the Professor had stored seeds and provisions in his vaults it was with the thought that, if the worst should happen, he and his companions might repopulate the earth. But now every such prospect dissolved away.

As their strength ebbed, a holy calm spread over the souls of all. The Professor found words:

"Such is the course of evolution. The sun, which for millions of years gave light

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and heat to our system and supported life on the earth, was about to sink into exhaustion and become a cold and inert mass. Its energy could not be revived, except by such a catastrophe as has occurred. The sun is restored to what it was before there was any earth upon which it could shed its rays, and will in time be ready to run its course anew. In order that a race may be renewed it must die like an individual. Untold ages must once more elapse while life is reappearing on earth and developing in higher forms. But to the Power which directs and controls the whole process the ages of humanity are but as days, and it will await in sublime patience the evolution of a new earth and a new order of animated nature, perhaps as far superior to that we have witnessed as ours was to that which preceded it."

A LITTLE SURPRISE

BY

MARY STEWART CUTTING

AUTHOR OF "LITTLE STORIES OF MARRIED LIFE"

ILLUSTRATED BY URQUHART WILCOX

ANITA GIBBONS had been waiting outside at the station on the bench nearest the field since twenty minutes of six, and it was now nearly seven as she rose to go. The bright pleasure with which she had started out was fled: he had not come. The sun, wind, and perfume of the spring afternoon, in combination with a becoming new suit and hat, had produced their annual effect of inspiring her to surprise her husband by meeting him on his return from town, that they might walk home bridally together in the sweet evening daylight. She had been hitherto undeterred by remembrance of the historic fact that Mr. Gibbons was never known to come on time when thus pleasurably expected; but memory was beginning to chill her now, as well as the wind on her back. She had done all this before!

Yet what business, unknown this morning, could have kept him? It was neither the first nor the last of the month, always mysterious days of threatened detention. He had not passed her by unnoticed, for she had risen as each train came in to scan the men who dropped on to the platform and hurried off, some of them looking back to raise their hats to the pretty woman on the platform.

She hurried now as she walked across the field, feeling guiltily amid her disappointment that dinner would be waiting, and that she had left no word of her whereabouts with the maid, having in fact slipped out of the house unseen, to escape the clamoring notice of her only child, who was near his early bedtime.

"Good-evening, Mrs. Gibbons. Coming back from town so late?"

She looked up to see a friend approaching on the foot-path.

"Oh, good-evening, Mr. Ferris! No, I've only come from the station; I've been looking for my husband."

He stopped half-way past her.

"Why, he came out in the five-fifteen with me! He slipped off when it slowed up, and jumped down the embankment; he said he was in a hurry to get home. Too bad if you've missed him."

"Yes, it is," said Mrs. Gibbons, hastily, breaking almost into a run. Arnold, she knew, hated to find her out of the house.

As she went up the steps now, the door opened before she reached it, and an

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excited voice exclaimed: "Ah, ma'am, it's yourself at last! It's the neighborhood we do be having searched for you!"

"What do you mean, Katy?" Mrs. Gibbons, who had stood arrested on the threshold, pushed her way in. "Where is Mr. Gibbons?"

"He's gone."

"*Gone!*"

"Yes, ma'am, gone back to the city. 'Twas like this: he bid me say that he had to be meeting friends — I disremember the name — on the other side, at the ferry, or he could have telephoned 'em, ma'am. 'Twas a grand dinner they had planned for to-night, unexpected like."

"Was the name —" Mrs. Gibbons paused that she might have courage to grasp her loss — "Was the name Atterbury?"

"It was, ma'am."

Her beloved Atterburys! They were to sail for Rio at the end of the week. This was a dinner and a theatre party planned before and postponed. They *could* not have it without her.

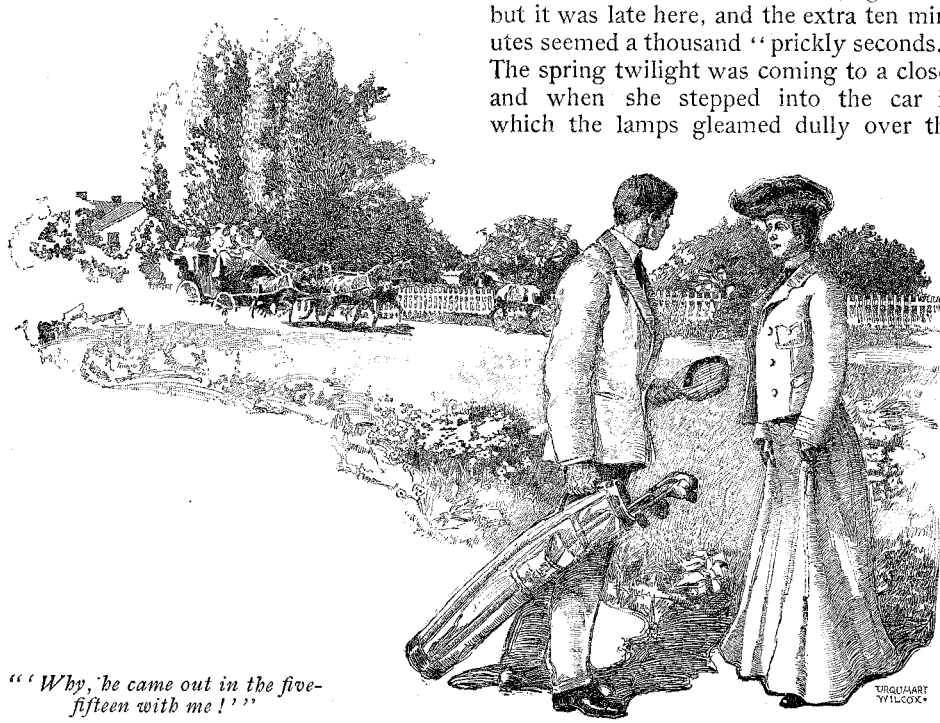
"Mr. Gibbons must have known I'd be home in a minute!"

"Sure, he waited for you, ma'am, till he had to run to the station below to catch the express; but he bid me tell you to be sure and take the seven o'clock train in, and he'd keep the party waiting at the ferry for you."

Mrs. Gibbons glanced at the clock. It was after seven now! But there was a seven-twenty-five train which reached town almost as soon, and Arnold would surely wait for that, even if the others had gone on to Martin's, where they would dine. The Atterburys always went to Martin's. She was accustomed to try and bend fate to her uses with an uncalculating ardor that focused itself entirely on the impulse of the moment. To the suburbanite a little dinner in town is the height of pleasure, the one perfect feast! And with the Atterburys! She really could not miss it.

"I don't care for anything to eat. Don't let the fire out," she dictated rapidly. "See that Harold doesn't get uncovered, and *don't* bolt the front door. We'll be home before twelve, but you needn't sit up for us. Just lie on the lounge in the nursery." She did not remind forgetful Katy to put the milk tickets in the pail set outside the back door, and only remembered it as she was half-way to the station.

The train was due in town at eight-five, but it was late here, and the extra ten minutes seemed a thousand "prickly seconds." The spring twilight was coming to a close, and when she stepped into the car in which the lamps gleamed dully over the



"'Why, he came out in the five-fifteen with me!'"

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"'I'm looking for my husband.'"

plush seats, it was like stepping into the long tunnel of the night. Only a few men from further up the road sprawled and dozed wearily on their way. She was unaccustomed to going out thus alone, and for an instant a panic-struck thought of failure seized her, but she lost it in the action of her hurrying brain, which constantly pictured the delightful meeting with her expectant husband and the waiting party. By the inalienable law of travel, which ordains that delay in one mode of locomotion means delay in every other, the ferry-boat could not "hit her slip," but wobbled up and down crosswise in the current, bumping against the piles at either end, with much ringing of the pilot's bell, and losing of minutes — and minutes — and minutes. But at last Mrs. Gibbons made her way into the big, lighted waiting-room, the haven of her hopes. It took no more than one glance to reveal that there was neither group nor husband waiting for her. The place was entirely empty, save for a few Italian emigrants, and the clock pointed to twenty minutes of nine.

So vividly had Mrs. Gibbons pictured her own state of mind as that of her husband — a habit of which fell experience could not break her — that even in the shock of not finding him she felt instantly that some provision had been made for this contingency. She could go straight over and join the party at Martin's, but he might have left some word for her. The man at the news stand might know. She hovered uncertainly around the pictorial exhibit, trying to screw up a suddenly-waning courage, and then found voice to say engagingly:

"I'm looking for my husband."

"What did you say, lady?" The man stopped in his work of sorting papers.

"I'm looking for my husband. He's been waiting for me here for a long time — with a party — but he's gone now. I thought perhaps he had left some message here with you."

"What kind of looking man was he?" asked the news clerk. He leaned forward companionably.

"He — he's tall, and clean shaven, with

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a light overcoat, and blue eyes — and —" She groped around for some distinguishing characteristic to elicit a gleam of response —"a square chin — with a dimple in it." She felt her own fatuousness. "You — you'd know him if you saw him."

The clerk turned to a boy who had appeared behind the counter.

"Did you see a man with a light overcoat, and —" a spasm passed over his face —"and a dimple in his chin? Did he leave any message here?" Mrs. Gibbons felt hotly that he was laughing at her, although he looked impassive.

"Naw," said the boy, "he didn't leave no message with me." He added on reflection, "I ain't seen no one hanging 'round but a chunky feller with a black *mus*tache."

"He hasn't seen any one but a stout man with a black mustache," reported the clerk officially, while two pairs of eyes stared at her in a disconcerting manner.

"Good-evening, Mrs. Gibbons; is there anything we can do for you?"

"Oh, Mrs. Worthington — and Mr. Worthington!" Mrs. Gibbons looked as one who sees a familiar face in the desert. "You don't *know* how glad I am to meet you! I'm looking for my husband."

"Indeed!" said Mrs. Worthington, with a faint chill of surprise. She was a slight woman, elegantly gowned, with a thin expressionless face. Her husband was like unto her, with the overcoat of opulence. They were new neighbors of Mrs. Gibbons, who kept themselves politely aloof from suburban social life, expending most of their time in town, where they seemed to have a large connection. They were perhaps the last persons to whom Mrs. Gibbons would have turned in a dilemma, but she found comfort in their curious attention as she explained the situation, to conclude by saying:

"Of course, I'll go right over now to Martin's. If they waited for me here until after eight, they would be hardly more than started at dinner. All I want to know is what car I ought to take."

Mrs. Worthington's eyelids flickered a response to her husband.

"Pray allow us to escort you there," said Mr. Worthington. "It is really quite on our way."

"Oh, you're *very* kind," said Mrs. Gibbons, following her leaders gratefully, after a moment or two of demur. She had naturally the feeling that when a man took the thing in hand it would be all right.

"I didn't know it was so dark at night when you were out alone by yourself, until I came off the ferry-boat," she confided.

Mrs. Worthington's eyelids flickered assent. She sat in the trolley-car in a sort of isolated though subdued richness of attire, her heavy silken skirts folded over decorously to escape contaminating touch, her embossed cloak and large boa held elegantly in place with her white-gloved hand. She seemed to demand a coach and four. The light spring suit which Mrs. Gibbons had thought so fetching in the afternoon looked cheap and thin in comparison. She did not know of the blue intenseness of her eyes and the rich flush on her young cheek which made each man who entered the car turn to look at her.

When Mr. Worthington bent over from the suspending strap to ask, "You are quite sure your husband is at Martin's?" she answered with her bright, upward glance, "Oh, yes, quite sure!" He would be at a little round table, with John and Agnes Atterbury, in the red-carpeted room, looking out for her, and how glad they would be to see her!

She dashed up the steps ahead of the Worthingtons, and a waiter came deferentially forward. Why should her heart suddenly fail her when she stood looking in upon the lighted scene?

"I'm looking for my husband," said Mrs. Gibbons. She dashed from one doorway to another, peering in. "No, he isn't here — perhaps in the other room — I don't see him here either. It's very strange, *very*!"

"What is it Madame desires?" The headwaiter was following her rushing movements.

"I'm looking for my husband" — in full torrent of explanation her tone had grown louder. "He came here a little while ago." She paused, suddenly aware of a whisper sibilating around.

"She's looking for her husband." Several people stopped eating. The headwaiter regarded her suspiciously.

"Was Monsieur alone?"

"No, oh, no!" said Mrs. Gibbons with eager candor. "No, indeed! There was a lady ——"

"Aa — h!" said the headwaiter. "Monsieur was with another lady!" An

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embarrassing murmur of interest made itself felt. He fixed her with a placating eye, as he added, hurriedly. "But Monsieur, as Madame perceives, is not here. He exists not. If the carriage of Madame—" he stopped happily— "But behold now the friends of Madame!"

The wild blaze of happiness died down almost as suddenly as it had risen in Mrs. Gibbons' breast, as she turned to see the Worthingtons advancing decorously once more to her rescue. Her bright hopes were buried in ashes.

"Oh, I don't know what to do," she breathed. He isn't here after all—*he isn't here!*"

"Will you not go on with us to the opera?" asked Mrs. Worthington. "We would be very glad to have you. We did not care to get in for the first act."

"Oh, no, I couldn't do that—you're so very kind—but I couldn't really. I must get home at once. Mr. Gibbons will go home early. I want to go home."

"We will then, of course, return with you," said Mr. Worthington, resignedly.

"Oh, please, *please* don't! It isn't at all necessary. I *couldn't* have you do it. I know the way now, and—please don't!"

"Mr. Worthington will not allow you to go home alone," said his wife, with polite weariness of the subject. "The next train does not leave until ten o'clock. Of course, if you really wish so much to return—although Mr. Gibbons is not at all likely to get back before we would—do not hesitate out of consideration for us or *our* convenience. But I think you would enjoy the opera."

Mrs. Gibbons stood unhappily irresolute. How could she drag these people home with her, much as she now longed to get there? If they would *only* let her go alone! After all, if Arnold were off having a good time, why shouldn't she be gay and have a good time, too?

"Well, if you really want to take me—and it won't be very late—" She was conscious of her ungraciousness. "Oh, I'll enjoy it immensely!"

"We will leave whenever you say so," said Mr. Worthington, with his invariable deference.

So unused was Mrs. Gibbons to going out with any one but her husband that Mr. Worthington's arm felt startlingly thin and queer and unnatural when her hand rested on it as he helped her across the street. Everything was unnatural. Her acceptance, she found, necessitated his standing in the rear of the house, while she occupied his seat. Mrs. Worthington relinquished her entirely to the promised enjoyment. The music was indeed beautiful, but she still kept hold of the ever-tightening thread of suspense and longing; Arnold might be gay without her, but she couldn't be gay without him. To think of all she was missing choked her! Mr. Worthington came forward between the acts to ask perfunctorily if Mrs. Gibbons wished to leave, but his wife showed no signs of moving.

It was with the first joy of the evening that she saw the curtain descend, and felt that she could tear at full speed for the elevated road and her own dear ferry and her own dear home. She must get there before Arnold, or he would be wild with anxiety; her desire to meet him in town was nothing to her desire now to head him off at home. But she reckoned without her host, literally. Her entertainers had been met by friends as they passed slowly down amid the crush in the aisle, and after the voluble greetings she was panic-struck by hearing one of the strangers say:

"You'll come to supper with us now? Just around the corner!"

"Oh, yes!" Mrs. Worthington was almost animated. "If we have time," she added, turning to her husband.

"Why, we can't get the twelve o'clock, if we stay, but we will have plenty of time for the twelve-thirty, if Mrs. Gibbons doesn't object," said Mr. Worthington.

"We have a friend with us," said Mrs. Worthington, in languid explanation. "Mrs. Gibbons, Mrs. Freshet, Mr. Freshet."

"We will, of course, be pleased to have your friend take supper with us," said Mrs. Freshet.

How could Mrs. Gibbons object? Her eyes pleaded, but her lips were perforce silent; and, comfortably settled in the restaurant, the others talked about matters of common interest, while she sat on the edge of her chair by the gleaming little table, and fumbled at her oysters with her fork, watching the hands of the clock at the end of the room. The Freshets were even more ornately dressed than the Worthingtons, with a floridity of manner that somehow overstepped a certain delicate line.

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Once Mrs. Freshet smiled at the guest over her white satin and sables to ask:

"Is this the friend of whose beautiful home I have heard so much?"

"I—I think not," said Mrs. Gibbons, with a stricken glimpse of the interior of her little dwelling. "I only met the Worthingtons by accident to-night," she added, impulsively, with a longing for sympathy. "I was looking for my husband."

"How singular!" said Mrs. Freshet, with a blank stare, and turned at once to continue a conversation on bargains with Mrs. Worthington, while Mrs. Gibbons, trying to make sprightly remarks in response to Mr. Freshet and Mr. Worthington, agonizingly watched the clock. Ten minutes of twelve—five minutes of twelve—she could not have stood it a second longer, when Mr. Worthington rose to hurry them off.

The rushing of the elevated train could not keep up with Mrs. Gibbons's hastening spirit; but somehow, inexplicably, after a while even the rushing stopped—the train halted—went forward a little—and halted again, between stations.

"Oh, *what* is the matter?" said Mrs. Gibbons, as Mr. Worthington returned with several men from investigation.

"Agonizingly watched the clock."

"Oh, nothing to speak of; there's a fire ahead somewhere, and we're blocked for a few minutes. Mrs. Gibbons—*Madam!* Pray keep your seat, you can *not* get out!"

"They do say as there's a family yet in the burning house," suggested a sympathizing listener.

"Naw, they got thim out, but there's two firemen hurted," said another.

"What is it, Amelia!" Mr. Worthington turned his attention hastily from Mrs. Gibbons to his wife. "Do you feel faint?"

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"A little," murmured Mrs. Worthington, reproachfully.

Mrs Gibbons had a sickened feeling. She could have felt faint too, if her husband had been along to sit down by her solicitously, and tell her to lean on him. She would have *liked* to feel faint. But instead, she was forced, in common decency, to be solicitous too for Mrs. Worthington, although she had begun to hate her. Mr. Worthington looked nervously at his watch until the train started again, and when they got out to walk to the ferry, he hurried his wife along at a pace with which Mrs. Gibbons tried in vain to keep up over the uneven, dirty, dimly lighted pavements in those winding streets near the river. Arnold never let her walk so fast that way; she owned an ankle that had once been sprained, and sometimes now turned under her disastrously. But hurry as she might, they hurried faster, under the impulse of the new fear which made itself felt to her without the need of words. She caught up to the couple, and clutched them as they stood suddenly motionless, inside the ferry-house, facing her.

"What do you *stop* for? Why don't you go *on?*" she demanded fiercely, although she knew too well what the dread answer must be. The supreme stroke of suburban fate had befallen them. They had missed the last train out!

Only the initiated know what this really means. To be cut off inexorably from home, and the children, and the fires, and the incompetent servants or the anxious watchers — it is something subtly feared in every evening journey into town, but only once in a lifetime perhaps is it experienced.

"We had better go to a hotel," said Mrs. Worthington, with agitation. "We will *have* to go to a hotel, Foster."

"Perhaps we can get out home someway," he answered, with the instinct of the man who considers two hours in his own bed worth ten in any other.

Mrs. Gibbons cast the reserve of decency to the winds. They had made her miss this train! Her husband waiting for her — the sleeping Harold uncovered — the milk tickets to be put in the pail to-morrow — "I don't care what *you* do; *I* can't stay in town to-night. I *won't* stay in town, Mr. Worthington! I'll have to get home to-night if I *swim* for it!"

"No need to do that," said a man rapidly coming out with a pipe-smoking group from the ferry-house. "We're going out on the twelve-forty-five boat on the other road, a couple of blocks below here, and take the trolley out. It's Mrs. Gibbons, isn't it? I don't believe you recognize me. I saw your husband an hour or so ago at Weber and Fields."

"Oh, *thank* you!" said Mrs. Gibbons. "Oh, thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you!" She stumbled after the group over the cobblestones outside of the long wharves, still insanely warbling her gratitude, her protectors sullenly stalking after her. They crushed and wedged themselves into the midst of an unsavory and strenuous populace on the boat that pushed out slowly into the fog of the river, but that did not matter — they were saved, they were off! They were surely bound for that other side on which lay all that made life worth living. Then there was another mad rush for the trolley car that went their way. Fighting, struggling, pressing, the three shot into seats, exhausted, and whizzed off into the dark night. Mr. Worthington, after a few minutes, went sound asleep, lurching as the car lurched, his wife, poor woman, pale enough as she sat with face averted from Mrs. Gibbons, her lips pressed tightly together, one hand holding mechanically to her raiment, and the other within her husband's arm. Men sat with their heads on their sweethearts' shoulders, in true early morning trolley-car fashion, and every inch of standing room was packed too thick for the eye to penetrate with a singing, drunken, cat-calling, indecent crowd, the last scum of a great city. It was an offence to delicacy to be there. The lights flared wildly up and then went out at intervals. When they went out, Mrs. Gibbons felt a cold terror. She had always been afraid of drunken men, and she was so used to the protection of love! How sorry Arnold would be when she told him about it all, how tender he would be of her!

Oh, she had never realized before how utterly married she was, how long she had ceased to remember the independence of her girlhood, for what a short distance her little struts and flights were planned! So helpless, so forlorn, so terribly outside of life was she without him, without that

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individual care which was as much a part of existence as her own ability to raise her food to her mouth, or move one foot before another! She thought of a woman she knew who had lost her husband, and who had said, "I did not know it could be like this." He had "given his body to the storm" many a time and oft for her dear sake; yet even for her a day might sometime come — like this — when —. Her soft cheek was cold and wet, and even through her thought of him she was also trying to get home and put those milk tickets in the pail so that the child would not be bereft in the morning. One must always remember a little child's needs.

"Ye're frightenin' the lady, ye big bloke."

"I ain't frightenin' of her, ye——"

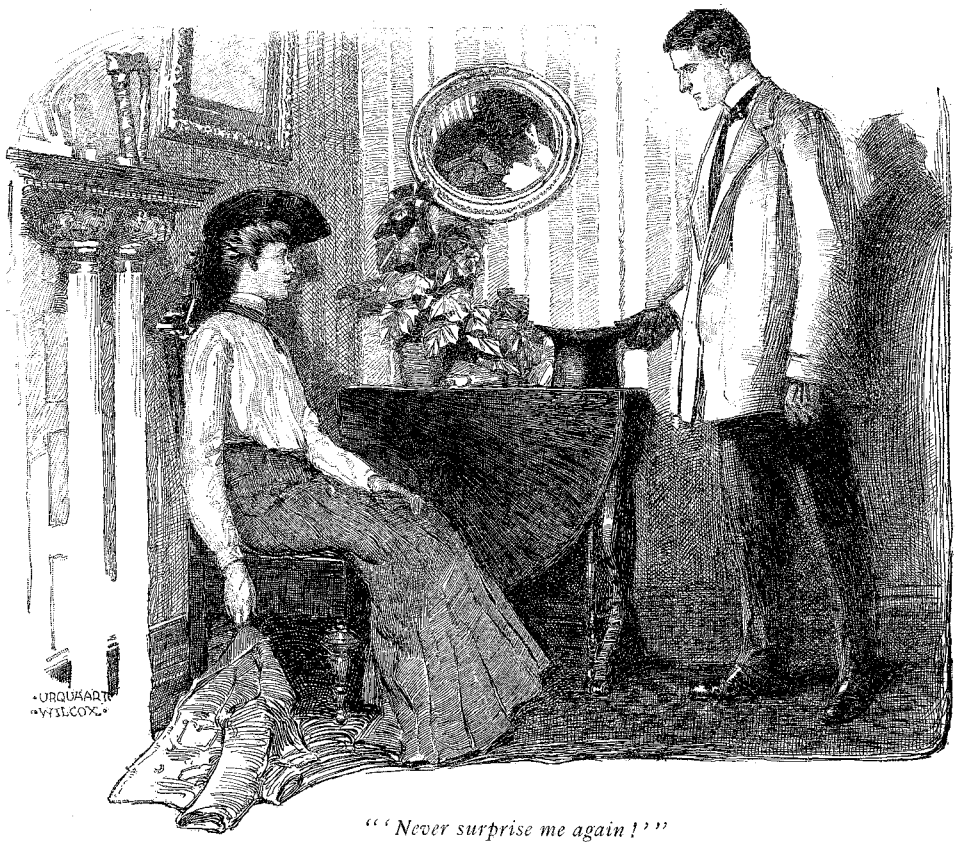
She shrank painfully at the notice thrust upon her. For hours, and hours, and hours they were jigging off over the dark salt meadows.

Crash, lurch, jam — everything came to a sudden stop. The conductor called, "All out here for the car ahead."

The sleeping ones awoke. In the scuffle and rush forward Mrs. Gibbons became separated from her friends. The new car was already jammed when she reached it, with fighting in the doorway. With one foot raised to step up she was thrust to one side by a man who leapt from it, followed by several others dashing back across the tracks and down a side street, amid cries of "Catch him! Get the pocket-book! Catch the thief!"

There was a face — could it be her husband's? She turned wildly to peer after it into the blankness outside of the car lights. The next instant the bell had rung, and the car, with the crowd on the platform all looking one way, was vanishing swiftly down the roadway, while Mrs. Gibbons, unnoticed, stood alone upon the rails. She made a futile step after it, and then stopped, appalled. She was left behind.

Opposite was the long, cavernous opening of a car-house, filled with the stalled cars. Near her was a saloon, ending what seemed a scattered row of small, mean houses and shops, closed and dark.



"'Never surprise me again!'"

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Ahead there was a stretch of empty lots, with a faint, stationary glimmer of light down the road. But the saloon, though by no means brilliant, was the lightest place. There was no sound from within. After some hesitation, Mrs. Gibbons wandered up on the low platform that topped the two steps, watched by a couple of men from the car-house. Her heart was in her mouth as one of them came forward; but he only glanced at her and went in the saloon, to come out again with a wooden chair.

"Better set," he remarked, laconically, and disappeared across the street. A moment later there were other footsteps from the saloon, and looking up, she saw a policeman wiping his mouth.

"Got left by the car?" he said.

"Yes," said Mrs. Gibbons, raising her blue and guileless eyes to his. "I didn't know it was going so soon. I was looking for my husband."

The policeman's face changed from solicitude to the cheerful acceptance of a familiar situation.

"Give ye the slip, did he? A lady like you, too! Sure he's the bad lot, and not wort' your lookin' for. Now don't be frettin' yourself, the Queen couldn't be safer. I'm wid you till the car comes. 'Tis an hour away."

"It's very good of you," said Mrs. Gibbons, gratefully.

Of all the chances and changes of this wild Walpurgis night, there could be nothing stranger than this, that she, Nita Gibbons, should be sitting alone amid the dark marshes, in front of a Jersey "gin-mill," at half-past two o'clock in the morning. It was so entirely past all imagining that frenzy had left her. She would probably never get home again, but she had ceased to struggle against fate. She sat there instead, passive, her slight figure bent against the cold night wind, and her hair half falling down under her battered hat, looking dreamily at the late twinkling stars in the black sky, and the gloomy car-house opposite, and at the policeman who walked up and down through the shadows. He swayed a little unsteadily, but he represented the guardianship of the law. Once he came close to her and asked encouragingly, "Would ye like a doggy?"

"What kind?" said Mrs. Gibbons, with a hazy fear of too large a protective animal.

He pointed over his shoulder toward the stationary light down the road. "The kind they do be havin' in the Owl Wagon, down there — frankfooties or doggies, 'tis the same. I could get ye wan, wid a roll; they're cleaned out in the s'loon here."

"Thank you, I'd rather not eat," said Mrs. Gibbons in haste, and then started nervously as the noise of footsteps running broke upon the ear. The three men who had followed the thief came in sight from the direction in which they had fled from the car. One called out, "Good-night, I'm going to hoof it home!"

And another voice also called, "Glad you got your pocket-book back again — ought to have got the fellow, too."

The third said nothing, as he came toward the platform. Mrs. Gibbons turned her head away. The next instant a voice of amazement said, "*Nita!* You here!" and, looking up, she saw her husband.

"Oh, Arnold, Arnold!" She stopped short in view of his face. "Oh, Arnold, I don't wonder you're surprised to see me, dear, but I've been looking for you!"

"Looking for *me!* Nita! *Nita!* NITA!"

The astonishment in his voice held something ominous in it. She clung to his arm with both hands, as she rose with him, and hardly realized, in her excited explaining and explaining, that she was being borne off down the road without waiting for the car, at a tremendous pace, and still spasmodically explaining to a portentous silence. When he spoke at last it was in a tone that sounded dangerous:

"So the Worthingtons went off and *left* you?"

"No, no, they were *in* the car, they——"

"I'll — I'll *see* Worthington to-morrow!" He paused for control, and Mrs. Gibbons had a swift vision of Mr. Worthington's head rolling off into a basket. "I never heard such a lot of crazy stuff — I never *heard* of such a thing — I *never* heard of such a thing! It all comes of your being out of the house when I came home. What on earth you want to go wild-goose chasing for at the very time you know I'm coming home ——"

"But, Arnold, I *didn't* go wild-goose chasing. I went to the station to surprise you."

His anger grew.

"To surprise me! Then let me know next time you want to surprise me. I've

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had enough surprise to last me all the rest of my life."

He broke off with a shudder as if the thought were too much for him.

"Well, you just missed it, not being with us to-night. You'll never have such another chance, never. The Atterburys won't be back for five years."

"And did you enjoy it without *me!*"

"Enjoy it! Of course I enjoyed it. I'd have been a fool not to. I had a glorious time, the best dinner I ever ate, and Atterbury? — What on earth you wanted to spoil it all for I can't see. *Take* care!" — his arm went around her closely. "You'll turn your ankle." His touch was ineffably gentle and sure, in spite of the masterful rage of his tone.

"Oh, Arnold, I've been so unhappy all the evening. I——"

He went on, remorseless. "I'm glad you were. I hope you *were* unhappy. It will teach you never to do such a thing again. When you didn't meet us at the ferry, I was confounded. I couldn't think *what* had happened to you. If everything hadn't been ordered ahead, tickets and all, I'd have come straight home, but I couldn't leave the Atterburys in the lurch when *you* had, though I hated to go without you. It just spoiled the whole thing. I've been worrying ever since that infernal hold-up in the elevated, thinking of you at home alone, and then I find you gallivanting around at the junction at three o'clock in the morning, after coming out in that outrageous car. If I'd known you were there — ! Well, you were just crazy to do such a thing" — he set his teeth — "it makes me *wild* to think of it. You don't know *what* might have happened. I'll be afraid to go off and leave you home alone. I don't know what you'll do. You ought to be looked after like a child. You oughtn't to be left a *minute*. What's the matter?"

He slowed up the pace that was rapidly nearing them to home. His storming voice deepened reluctantly into a distressful tenderness.

"What's the matter? You mustn't cry in the street, Nita! You mustn't, dear."

"Oh, I've had such a horrid, horrid, horrid time!" The tears were blinding her so that she leaned unseeing on the enfolding arm that guided her. "I don't mind your scolding me. I'm not crying for *that*. I don't mind anything you say. I don't mind even your not having kissed me. Nothing makes any difference to me as long as it's you. I'm crying because I'm so glad it's you, and I can hear your voice again. When I was trying to find you it seemed as if it would never end; it seemed — it seemed —" She raised her wet eyes to his.

He took a swift look up and down the empty, lifeless street, laid out straight and stiff in the cold, faint glimmer of the dawn, and then his lips sought hers in deep, deep acknowledgment of the joy, and of the sorrow, to which all love is born — one of those moments stolen in its beautifulness from the life to come.

But his voice was tense again, as he set her down within her own doorway, and he looked at her with stern eyes of jealous care, from which she hid the woman's smile of love at dear love's unreason.

"You're nearly *dead!* Don't you stir out of this house to-morrow until I come home — do you hear? *Never* surprise me again!"

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PITTSBURG: A CITY ASHAMED

THE STORY OF A CITIZENS' PARTY THAT BROKE THROUGH ONE RING INTO ANOTHER

BY

LINCOLN STEFFENS

AUTHOR OF "THE SHAME OF MINNEAPOLIS," AND "THE SHAMELESSNESS OF ST. LOUIS"

ILLUSTRATED BY JULES GUÉRIN AND WITH PHOTOGRAPHS

MINNEAPOLIS was an example of police corruption; St. Louis of financial corruption. Pittsburg is an example of both police and financial corruption. The two other cities have found each an official who has exposed them. Pittsburg has had no such man and no exposure. The city has been described physically as "Hell with the lid off"; politically it is that same with the lid on. I am not going to lift the lid. The exposition of what the people know and stand is the purpose of these articles, not the exposure of corruption, and the exposure of Pittsburg is not necessary. There are earnest men in the town who declare it must blow up of itself soon. I doubt that; but even if it does burst, the people of Pittsburg will learn little more than they know now. It is not ignorance that keeps American citizens subservient; neither is it indifference. The Pittsburgers know, and a strong minority of them care; they have risen against their ring and beaten it, only to look about and find another ring around them. Angry and ashamed, Pittsburg is a type of the city that has tried to be free and failed.

The Iron City and Its Men of Steel

A sturdy city it is, too, the second in Pennsylvania. Two rivers flow past it to make a third, the Ohio, in front, and all around and beneath it are natural gas and coal which feed a thousand furnaces that smoke all day and flame all night to make Pittsburg the Birmingham of America. Rich in natural resources, it is richest in the quality of its population. Six days and six nights these people labor, moulding iron and forging steel, and they are not tired; on the seventh day they rest, because that is the Sabbath. They are Scotch Presbyterians and Protestant Irish. This stock had an actual majority not many years ago, and now, though the population has grown to 354,000 in Pittsburg proper (counting Allegheny across the river, 130,000, and other communities, politically separate, but essentially integral parts of the proposed greater Pittsburg, the total is 750,000), the Scotch and Scotch-Irish still predominate, and their clean, strong faces characterize the crowds in the streets. Canny, busy, and brave, they built up their city almost in secret, making millions and hardly mentioning it. Not till outsiders came in to buy some of them out did the world (and Pittsburg and some of the millionaires in it) discover that the Iron City had been making not only steel and glass, but multi-millionaires. A banker told a business man as a secret one day about three years ago that within six months a "bunch of about a hundred new millionaires would be born in Pittsburg," and the births happened on time. And more beside. But even the bloom of millions did not hurt the city. Pittsburg is an unpretentious, prosperous city of tremendous industry and healthy, steady men.

Superior as it is in some other respects, however, Scotch-Irish Pittsburg, politically, is no better than Irish New York or Scandinavian Minneapolis, and little better than German St. Louis. These people, like any other strain of the free American, have despoiled the government—despoiled it, let it be despoiled, and bowed to the despoiling boss. There is nothing in the un-American excuse that this or that foreign nationality

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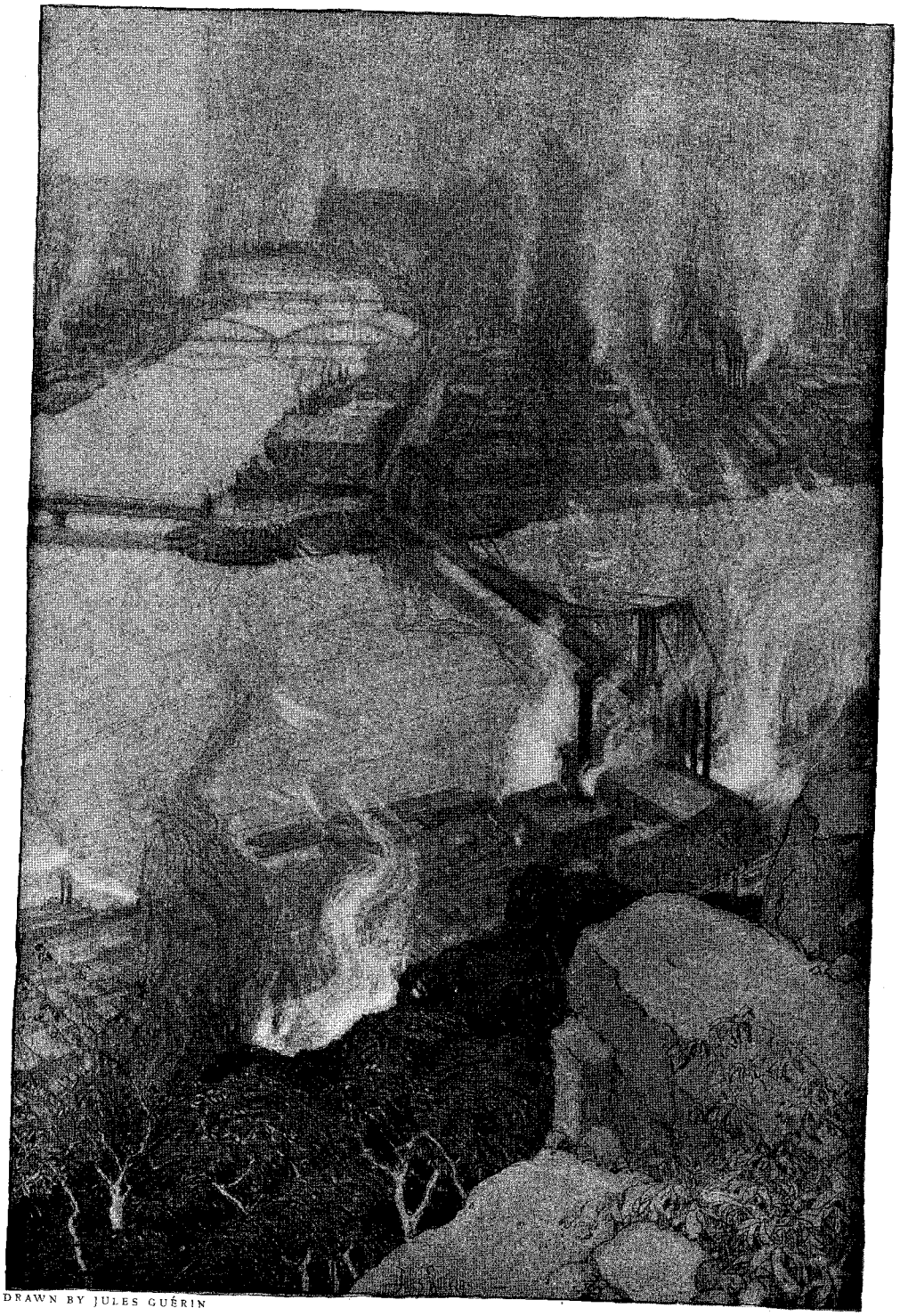

DRAWN BY JULES GUÉRIN

"A sturdy city."

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has prostituted "our great and glorious institutions." We all do it, all breeds alike. And there is nothing in the complaint that the lower elements of our city populations are the source of our disgrace. In St. Louis corruption came from the top, in Minneapolis from the bottom. In Pittsburg it comes from both extremities, but it began above.

Christopher L. Magee

Boss, financier, and First Citizen of Pittsburg; organizer of one of the most perfect municipal rings in the country. After his death his ring was smashed.

Corruption from on High

The railroads began the corruption of this city. There "always was some dishonesty," as the oldest public men I talked with said, but it was occasional and criminal till the first great corporation made it business-like and respectable. The municipality issued bonds to help the infant railroads to develop the city, and, as in so many American cities, the roads repudiated the debt and interest, and went into politics. The Pennsylvania Railroad was in the system from the start, and, as the other roads came in and found the city government bought up by those before them, they purchased their rights of way by outbribing the older roads, then joined the ring to acquire more rights for themselves and to keep belated rivals out. As corporations multiplied and capital branched out corruption increased naturally, but the notable characteristic of the "Pittsburg plan" of misgovernment was that it was not a haphazard growth, but a deliberate, intelligent organization. It was conceived in one mind, built up by one will, and this master spirit ruled, not like Croker in New York, a solid majority; nor

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like Butler in St. Louis, a bi-partisan minority; but the whole town — financial, commercial, and political. The boss of Pittsburg was Christopher L. Magee, a great man, and when he died he was regarded by many of the strongest men in Pittsburg as their leading citizen.

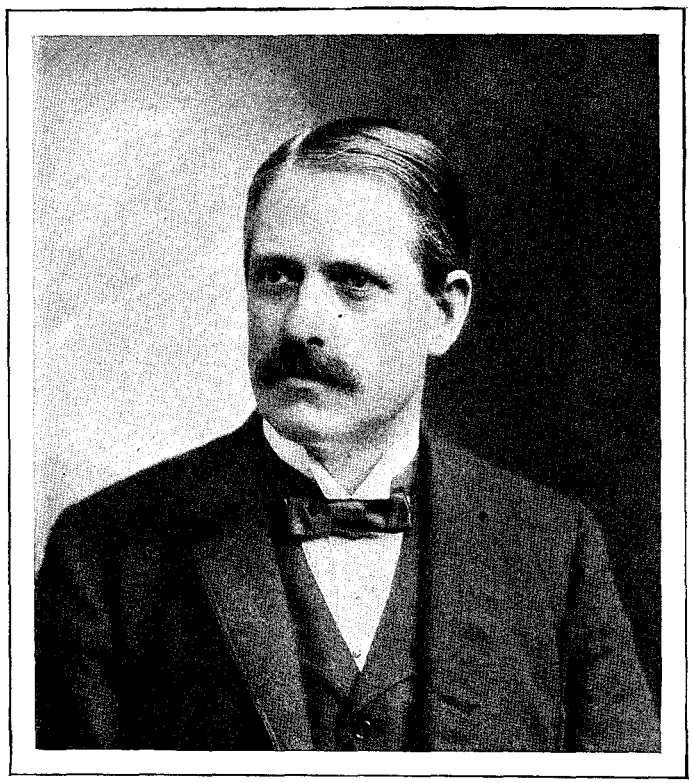
"Chris," as he was called, was a charming character. I have seen Pittsburgers grow black in the face denouncing his ring, but when I asked, "What kind of a man was Magee?" they would cool and say, "Chris? Chris was one of the best men God ever made." If I smiled, they would say, "That is all right. You smile, and you can go ahead and show up the ring. You may describe this town as the worst in the country. But you get Magee wrong and you'll have all Pittsburg up in arms." Then they would tell me that "Magee robbed the town," or, perhaps, they would speak of the fund raising to erect a monument to the dead boss.

So I must be careful. And, to begin with, Magee did not, technically speaking, rob the town. That was not his way, and it would be a carelessly unnecessary way in Pennsylvania. But surely he does not deserve a monument.

The Dynasty of Pittsburg

Magee was an American. His paternal great-grandfather served in the Revolution, and settled in Pittsburg at the close of the war. Christopher was born on Good Friday, April 14, 1848. He was sent to school till he was fifteen years old. Then his father died, and "Squire" or "Tommy" Steele, his uncle, a boss of that day, gave him his start in life with a place in the City Treasury. When just twenty-one, he made him cashier, and two years later Chris had himself elected City Treasurer by a majority of 1,100 on a ticket the head of which was beaten by 1,500 votes.

Such was his popularity; and, though he systematized and capitalized it, it lasted to the end, for the foundation thereof was



William Flinn

Lieutenant and successor of Magee; contractor and financier. Under him Magee's ring was broken by Bigelow and the Citizens' Party.

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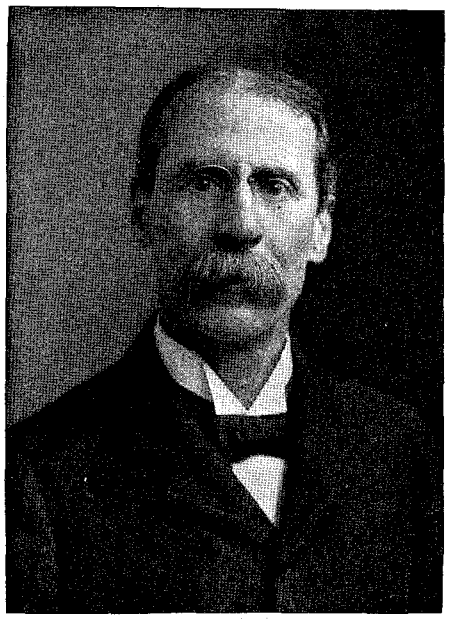

George W. Guthrie

A Pittsburg lawyer, and a Democrat, who fought the ring year in and year out, through defeat after defeat.

goodness of heart and personal attractiveness. Magee was tall, strong, and gracefully built. His hair was dark till it turned gray, and then his short mustache and his eyebrows held black, so that his face expressed easily sure power and genial, hearty kindness. But he was ambitious for power, and all his goodness of heart was directed by a shrewd mind.

When Chris saw the natural following gathering about him he realized, young as he was, the use of it, and he retired from office (holding only a fire commissionership) with the avowed purpose of becoming a boss. Determined to make his ring perfect, he went to Philadelphia to study the plan in operation there. Later, when the Tweed ring was broken, he spent months in New York looking into Tammany's machine methods and the mistakes which had led to its exposure and disruption. With that cheerful candor which softens indignation he told a fellow-townsman (who told me) what he was doing in New York; and when Magee returned he reported that a ring could be made as safe as a bank. He had, to start with, a growing town too busy for self-government; two not very unequal parties, neither of them well organized; a clear field in his own, the majority party in the city, county, and State. There was boodle, but it was loosely shared by too many persons. The governing instrument was the old charter of 1816, which lodged all the powers — legislative, administrative, and excutive — in the councils, common and select. The Mayor was a peace officer, with no responsible power. Indeed, there was no responsibility anywhere. There were no departments. Committees of councils did the work usually done by departments, and the councilmen, unsalaried and unanswerable individually, were organized into what might have become a combine had not Magee set about establishing the one-man power there.

Enter William Flinn

To control councils Magee had to organize the wards, and he was managing this successfully at the primaries, when a new and an important figure appeared on the scene — William Flinn. Flinn was Irish, a Protestant of Catholic stock, a boss contractor, and a natural politician. He beat one of Magee's brothers in his ward. Magee laughed, inquired, and, finding him a man of opposite or complementary disposition and talents, took him into a partnership. A happy, profitable combination, it lasted for life. Magee wanted power, Flinn wealth. Each got both these things; but Magee spent his wealth for more power, and Flinn spent his power for more wealth. Magee was the sower, Flinn the reaper. In dealing with men they came to be necessary to each other, these two. Magee attracted followers, Flinn employed them. The men Magee won Flinn compelled to obey, and those he lost Magee won back. When the councils were first under his control Magee stood in the lobby to direct them, always by suggestions and requests, which sometimes a mean and ungrateful fellow would say he could not heed. Magee told him it was all right, which saved the man, but lost the vote. So Flinn took the lobby post, and he said: "Here, you go and vote aye." If they disobeyed the plain order Flinn punished them, and so harshly that they would run to Magee to complain. He comforted them. "Never mind Flinn," he would say, sympathetically; "he gives me no end of trouble, too. But I'd like to have you do what he asked. Go and do it for me, and let me attend to Flinn. I'll fix him." Magee could command, too, and

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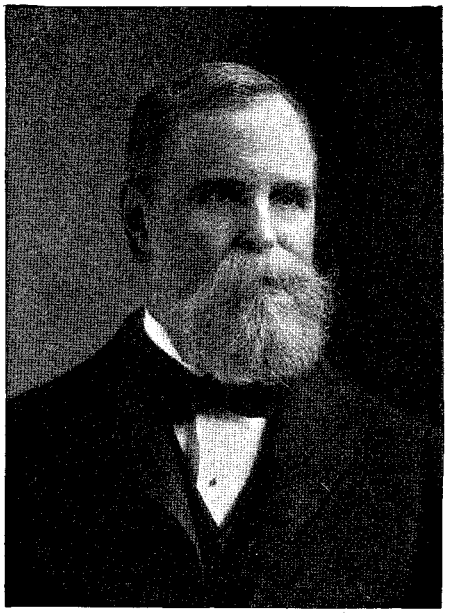
fight and punish. If he had been alone he probably would have hardened with years. And so Flinn, after Magee died, softened with time, but too late. He was useful to Magee, Magee was indispensable to him. Molasses and vinegar, diplomacy and force, mind and will, they were well mated. But Magee was the genius. It was Magee that laid the plans they worked out together.

Boss Magee's idea was not to corrupt the city government, but to be it; not to hire votes in councils, but to own councilmen; and so, having seized control of his organization, he nominated cheap or dependent men for the select and common councils. Relatives and friends were his first recourse, then came bar-tenders, saloon-keepers, liquor dealers, and others allied to the vices, who were subject to police regulation and dependent in a business way upon the maladministration of law. For the rest he preferred men who had no visible means of support, and to maintain them he used the usual means — patronage. And to make his dependents secure he took over the county government. Pittsburg is in Allegheny County, which has always been more strongly Republican than the city. No matter what happened in the city, the county pay-roll was always Magee's, and he made the county part of the city government.

Corrupting the Minority

With all this city and county patronage at his command, Magee went deliberately about undermining the Democratic party. The minority organization is useful to a majority leader; it saves him trouble and worry in ordinary times; in party crises he can use it to whip his own followers into line; and when the people of a city rise in revolt it is essential for absolute rule that you have the power not only to prevent the minority leaders from combining with the good citizens, but to unite the two organizations to whip the community into shape. Moreover, the existence of a supposed opposition party splits the independent vote and helps to keep alive that sentiment, "loyalty to party," which is one of the best holds the boss has on his unruly subjects. All bosses, as we have seen in Minneapolis and St. Louis, rise above partisan bias. Magee, the wisest of them, was also the most generous, and he liked to win over opponents



Oliver McClintock

A Pittsburg merchant. "This single citizen's long, brave fight is one of the finest stories in the history of municipal government."

who were useful to him. Whenever he heard of an able Democratic worker in a ward, he sent for his own Republican leader. "So-and-so is a good man, isn't he?" he would ask. "Going to give you a run, isn't he? Find out what he wants, and we'll see what we can do. We must have him." Thus the able Democrat achieved office for himself or his friend, and the city or the county paid. At one time, I was told, nearly one-quarter of the places on the pay-roll were held by Democrats, who were, of course, grateful to Chris Magee, and enabled him in emergencies to wield their influence against revolting Republicans. Many a time a subservient Democrat got Republican votes to beat a "dangerous" Republican, and when Magee, toward the end of his career, wished to go to the State Senate, both parties united in his nomination and elected him unanimously.

Corrupting Business

Business men came almost as cheap as politicians, and they came also at the city's expense. Magee had control of public funds and the choice of depositories. That is enough for the average banker — not only for him that is chosen, but for him

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also that may some day hope to be chosen — and Magee dealt with the best of those in Pittsburg. This service, moreover, not only kept them docile, but gave him and Flinn credit at their banks. Then, too, Flinn and Magee's operations soon developed on a scale which made their business attractive to the largest financial institutions for the profits on their loans, and thus enabled them to distribute and share in the golden opportunities of big deals. There are ring banks in Pittsburg, ring trust companies, and ring brokers. The manufacturers and the merchants were kept well in hand by many little municipal grants and privileges, such as switches, wharf rights, and street and alley vacations. These street vacations are a tremendous power in most cities. A foundry occupies a block, spreads to the next block, and wants the street between. In St. Louis the business man boodled for his street. In Pittsburg he went to Magee, and I have heard such a man praise Chris, "because when I called on him his outer office was filled with waiting politicians, but he knew I was a business man and in a hurry; he called me in first, and he gave me the street without any fuss. I tell you it was a sad day for Pittsburg when Chris Magee died." This business man, the typical American merchant everywhere, cares no more for his city's interest than the politician does, and there is more light on American political corruption in such a speech than in the most sensational exposure of details. The business men of Pittsburg paid for their little favors in "contributions to the campaign fund," plus the loss of their self-respect, the liberty of the citizens generally, and (this may appeal to their mean souls) in higher taxes.

As for the railroads, they did not have to be bought or driven in; they came, and promptly, too. The Pennsylvania appeared early, just behind Magee, who handled their passes and looked out for their interest in councils and afterwards at the State Legislature. The Pennsylvania passes, especially those to Atlantic City and Harrisburg, have always been a "great graft" in Pittsburg. For the sort of men Magee had to control a pass had a value above the price of a ticket; to "flash" one is to show a badge of power and membership in the ring. The big ringsters, of course, got from the railroads financial help when cornered in business deals — stock tips, shares in speculative and other financial turns, and political support. The Pennsylvania Railroad is a power in Pennsylvania politics, it is part of the State ring, and part also of the Pittsburg ring. The city paid in all sorts of rights and privileges, streets, bridges, etc., and in certain periods the business interests of the city were sacrificed to leave the Pennsylvania Road in exclusive control of a freight traffic it could not handle alone.

The Deal for the State

With the city, the county, the Republican and Democratic organizations, the railroads and other corporations, the financiers and the business men, all well under control, Magee needed only the State to make his rule absolute. And he was entitled to it. In a State like New York, where one party controls the Legislature and another the city, the people in the cities may expect some protection from party opposition. In Pennsylvania, where the Republicans have an overwhelming majority, the Legislature at Harrisburg is an essential part of the government of Pennsylvania cities, and that is ruled by a State ring. Magee's ring was a link in the State ring, and it was no more than right that the State ring should become a link in his ring. The arrangement was easily made. One man, Matthew S. Quay, had received from the people all the power in the State, and Magee saw Quay. They came to an understanding without the least trouble. Flinn was to be in the Senate, Magee in the lobby, and they were to give unto Quay political support for his business in the State in return for his surrender to them of the State's functions of legislation for the city of Pittsburg.

Now such understandings are common in our politics, but they are verbal usually and pretty well kept, and this of Magee and Quay was also founded in secret good faith. But Quay, in crises, has a way of straining points to win, and there were no limits to Magee's ambition for power. Quay and Magee quarreled constantly over the division of powers and spoils, so after a few years of squabbling they reduced their agreement to writing. This precious instrument has never been published. But the agreement was broken in a great row once, and when William Flinn and J. O.

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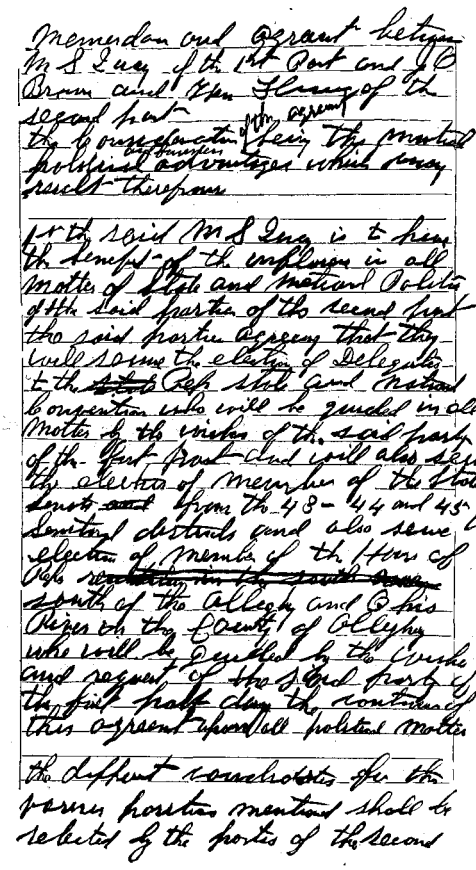
Brown undertook to settle the differences and renew the bond, Flinn wrote out in pencil in his own hand an amended duplicate which he submitted to Quay, whose son subsequently gave it out for publication. A facsimile of one page is reproduced in this article. Here is the whole contract, with all the unconscious humor of the "party of the first part" and "said party of the second part," a political-legal-commercial insult to a people boastful of self-government:

"Memorandum and agreement between M. S. Quay of the first part and J. O. Brown and William Flinn of the second part. The consideration of this agreement being the mutual political and business advantage which may result therefrom.

"First—The said M. S. Quay is to have the benefit of the influence in all matters in state and national politics of the said parties of the second part, the said parties agreeing that they will secure the election of delegates to the state and national convention, who will be guided in all matters by the wishes of the said party of the first part, and who will also secure the election of members of the state senate from the Forty-third, Forty-fourth, and Forty-fifth senatorial districts, and also secure the election of members of the house of representatives south of the Monongahela and Ohio rivers in the county of Allegheny, who will be guided by the wishes and request of the said party of the first part during the continuance of this agreement upon all political matters. The different candidates for the various positions mentioned shall be selected by the parties of the second part, and all the positions of state and national appointments made in this territory mentioned shall be satisfactory to and secure the indorsement of the party of the second part, when the appointment is made either by or through the party of the first part, or his friends or political associates. All legislation affecting the parties of the second part, affecting cities of the second class, shall receive the hearty co-operation and assistance of the party of the second part, and legislation which may affect their business shall likewise receive the hearty co-operation and help of the party of the first part. It being distinctly understood that at the approaching national convention, to be held at St. Louis, the delegates from the Twenty-second congressional district shall neither by voice nor vote do other than what is satisfactory to the party of the first part. The party of the first part agrees to use his influence and secure the support of his friends and political associates to support the Republican county and city ticket, when nominated, both in the city of Pittsburg and Allegheny, and the county of Allegheny, and that he will discountenance the factional fighting by his friends and associates for county offices during the continuation of this agreement. This agreement is not to be binding upon the parties of the second part when a candidate for any office who [*sic*] shall reside in Allegheny county, and shall only be binding if the party of the first part is a candidate for United States senator, to succeed himself so far as this office is concerned. In the Forty-third senatorial district a new senator



FACSIMILE OF THE FAMOUS QUAY-FLINN "MUTUAL POLITICAL AND BUSINESS ADVANTAGE AGREEMENT"

shall be elected to succeed Senator Upperman. In the Forty-fifth senatorial district the party of the first part shall secure the withdrawal of Dr. A. J. Barchfeld, and the parties of the second part shall withdraw as a candidate Senator Steel, and the parties of the second part shall secure the election of some party satisfactory to themselves. In the Twenty-second congressional district the candidates for congress shall be selected by the party of the second part. The term of this agreement to be for —— years from the signing thereof, and shall be binding upon all parties when signed by C. L. Magee."

Delivery of a City

Thus was the city of Pittsburg turned over by the State to an individual to do with as he pleased. Magee's ring was complete. He was the city, Flinn was the councils, the county was theirs, and now they had the State Legislature so far as Pittsburg was concerned. Magee and Flinn were the government and the law. How could they commit a crime? If they wanted something from the city they passed an ordinance granting it, and if some other

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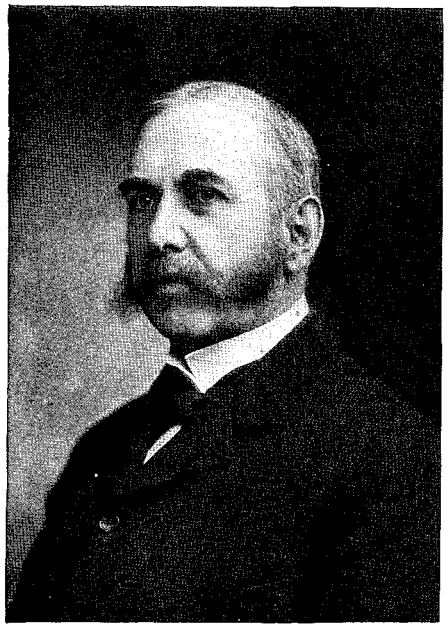
ordinance was in conflict that was repealed or amended. If the laws in the State stood in the way, so much the worse for the laws of the State; they were amended. If the constitution of the State proved a barrier, as it did to all special legislation, the Legislature enacted a law for cities of the second class (which was Pittsburg alone) and the courts upheld the Legislature. If there were opposition on the side of public opinion, there was a use for that also.



Thomas S. Bigelow

The new boss of Pittsburg. A retired capitalist, who seized the Citizens' party and beat the old ring to satisfy personal grudges.

E. M. Bigelow

Tom's brother; for many years the Director of Public Works. His quarrel with Flinn set Tom after Flinn and Magee.

The new charter which David D. Bruce fought through councils in 1886–7 was an example of the way Magee and, after him, Quay and other Pennsylvania bosses employed popular movements. As his machine grew Magee found council committees unwieldy in some respects, and he wanted a change. He took up Bruce's charter, which centered all executive and administrative power and responsibility in the Mayor and heads of departments, passed it through the Legislature, but so amended that the heads of departments were not to be appointed by the Mayor, but elected by councils. These elections were by expiring councils, so that the department chiefs held over, and with their patronage insured the re-election of the councilmen who elected them. The Magee-Flinn machine, perfect before, was made self-perpetuating. I know of nothing like it in any other city. Tammany in comparison is a plaything, and in the management of a city Croker was a child beside Chris Magee.*

Pittsburg, a Private Business

Magee and Flinn, owners of Pittsburg, made Pittsburg their business, and, monopolists in the technical economic sense of the word, they prepared to exploit it as if it were their private property. For con-

* The graft of Pittsburg falls conveniently into four classes: Franchises, public contracts, vice, and public funds. There was, besides these, a lot of miscellaneous loot — public supplies, public lighting, and the water supply. You hear of second-class fire-engines taken at first-class prices, water rents from the public works kept up because a private concern that supplied the South Side could charge no more than the city, a gas contract to supply the city lightly availed of. But I cannot go into these. Neither can I stop for the details of the system by which public funds were left at no interest with favored depositories from which the city borrowed at a high rate, or the removal of funds to a bank in which the ringsters were shareholders. All these things were managed well within the law, and that was the great principle underlying the Pittsburg plan.

The vice graft, for example, was not blackmail as it is in New York and most other cities. It is a legitimate business, conducted, not by the police, but in an orderly fashion by syndicates, and the chairman of one of the parties at the last election said it was worth $250,000 a year. I saw a man who was laughed at for offering $17,500 for the slot-machine concession; he was told that it was let for much more. "Speak easies" (unlicensed drinking places) pay so well that when they earn $500 or more in twenty-four hours their proprietors often make a bare living. Disorderly houses are managed by ward syndicates. Permission is had from the syndicate real estate agent, who alone can rent them. The syndicate hires the houses

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venience they divided it between them. Magee took the financial and corporate branch, turning the streets to his uses, delivering to himself franchises, and building and running railways. Flinn went in for public contracts for his firm, Booth & Flinn, Limited, and his branch boomed. Old streets were repaired, new ones laid out; whole districts were improved, parks made, and buildings erected. The improvement of their city went on at a great rate for years, with only one period of cessation, and the period of economy was when Magee was building so many traction lines that Booth & Flinn, Ltd., had all they could do with this work. It was said that no other contractors had an adequate "plant" to supplement properly the work of Booth & Flinn, Ltd. Perhaps that was why this firm had to do such a large proportion of the public work always. Flinn's Director of Public Works was E. M. Bigelow, a cousin of Chris Magee and another nephew of old Squire Steele. Bigelow, called the Extravagant, drew the specifications; he made the awards to the lowest *responsible* bidders, and he inspected and approved the work while in progress and when done. Flinn had a quarry, the stone of which was specified for public buildings; he obtained the monopoly of a certain kind of asphalt, and that kind was specified. Nor was this all. If the official contractor had done his work well and at reasonable prices the city would not have suffered directly; but his methods were so oppressive upon property holders that they caused a scandal. No action was taken, however, till Oliver McClintock, a merchant, in rare civic wrath, contested the contracts and fought them through the courts. This single citizen's long, brave fight is one of the finest stories in the history of municipal government. The frowns and warnings of cowardly fellow-citizens did not move him, nor the boycott of other business men, the threats of the ring, and the ridicule of ring organs. George W. Guthrie joined him later, and though they fought on undaunted, they were beaten again and again. The Director of Public Works controlled the initiative in court proceedings; he chose the judge who appointed the Viewers, with the result, Mr. McClintock reported, that the Department prepared the Viewers' reports. Knowing no defeat, Mr. McClintock photographed Flinn's pavements at places where they were torn up to show that "large stones, as they were excavated from sewer trenches, brick bats, and the debris of old coal tar sidewalks were promiscuously dumped in to make foundations, with the result of an uneven settling of the foundation, and the sunken and worn places so conspicuous everywhere in the pavements of the East End." One outside asphalt company tried to break the monopoly, but was easily beaten in 1889, withdrew, and after that, as one of them said, "We all gave Pittsburg a wide berth, recognizing the uselessness of offering competition so long as the door of the Department of Public Works is locked against us, and Booth & Flinn are permitted to carry the key." The monopoly enabled not only high prices on short guarantee, but carried with it all the contingent work. Curbing and grading might have been let separately, but they were not. In one contract Mr. McClintock cites, Booth & Flinn bid 50 cents for 44,000 yards of grading. E. H. Bochman offered a bid of 15 cents for the grading as a separate contract, and his bid was rejected. A property owner on Shady Lane, who was assessed for curbing at 80 cents a foot, contracted privately at the same time for 800 feet of the same standard curbing, from the same quarry, and set in place in the same manner, at 40 cents a foot!

"During the nine years succeeding the adoption of the charter of 1887," says Mr. Oliver McClintock in a report to the National Municipal League, "one firm (Flinn's) received practically all the asphalt paving contracts at prices ranging from $1 to

from the owners at, say, $35 a month, and he lets it to a woman at from $35 to $50 a week. For furniture the tenant must go to the "official furniture man," who delivers $1,000 worth of "fixings" for a note for $3,000, on which high interest must be paid. For beer the tenant must go to the "official bottler," and pay $2 for a one-dollar case of beer; for wines and liquors to the "official liquor commissioner," who charges $10 for five dollars' worth; for clothes to the "official wrapper maker." These women may not buy shoes, hats, jewelry, or any other luxury or necessity except from the official concessionaries, and then only at the official, monoply prices. If the victims have anything left, a police or some other city official is said to call and get it (there are rich ex-police officials in Pittsburg). But this is blackmail and outside the system, which is well understood in the community. Many men, in various walks of life, told me separately the names of the official bottlers, jewelers, and furnishers; they are notorious, but they are safe. They do nothing illegal. Oppressive, wretched, what you please, the Pittsburg system is safe.

That was the key-note of the Flinn-Magee plan, but this vice graft was not their business. They are credited with the suppression of disorder and decent superficial regulations of vice, which is a characteristic of Pittsburg. I know it is said that under the Philadelphia and Pittsburg plans, which are much alike, "all graft and all patronage go across one table," but if any "dirty money" reached the Pittsburg bosses it was in the form of contributions to the party fund, and came from the vice dealers only as it did from other business men.

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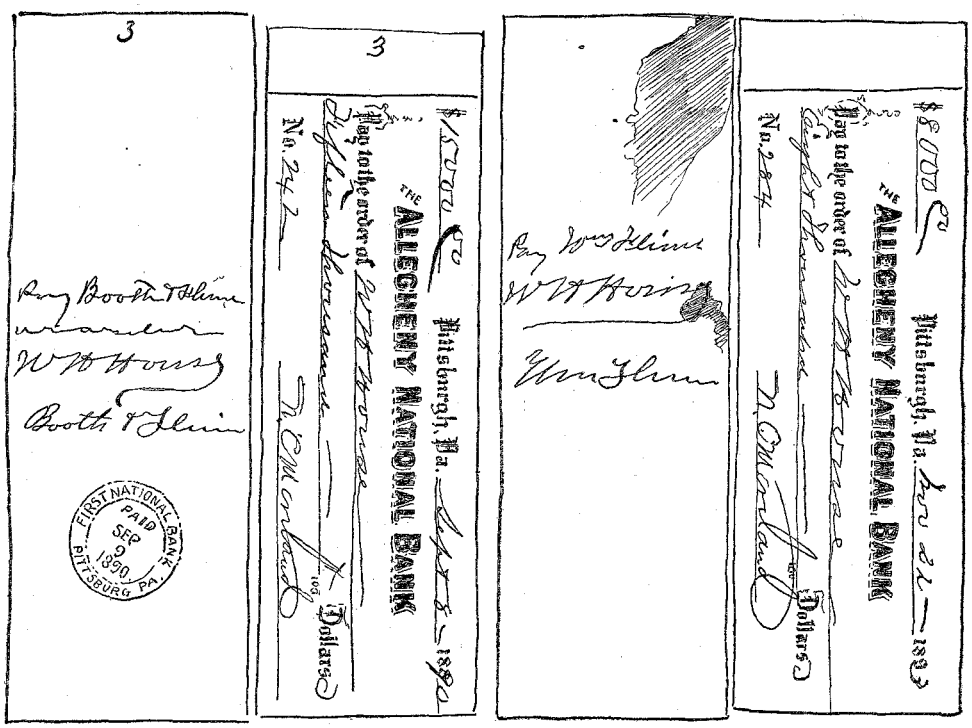

FACSIMILES OF CHECKS SHOWING THAT PUBLIC MONEY, EMBEZZLED BY PUBLIC OFFICIALS, WENT TO BOSS FLINN, WHO EXPLAINED THAT HE DID NOT KNOW THE CHECKS WERE FOR CITY MONEY

$1.80 per square yard higher than the average price paid in neighboring cities. Out of the entire amount of asphalt pavements laid during these nine years, represented by 193 contracts, and costing $3,551,131, only nine street blocks paved in 1896, and costing $33,400, were not laid by this firm."

Flinn's Methods Exposed

The building of bridges in this city of bridges, the repairing of pavements, park-making, and real estate deals in anticipation of city improvements were all causes of scandal to some citizens, sources of profit to others who were "let in on the ground floor." There is no space for these here. Another exposure came in 1897 over the contracts for a new Public Safety Building. J. O. Brown was Director of Public Safety. A newspaper, *The Leader*, called attention to a deal for this work, and George W. Guthrie and William B. Rogers, leading members of the Pittsburg bar, who followed up the subject, discovered as queer a set of specifications for the building itself as any city has on record. Favored contractors were named or their wares described all through, and a letter to the architect from J. O. Brown contained specifications for such favoritism, as, for example: "Specify the Westinghouse electric light plant and engines straight." "Describe the Van Horn Iron Co.'s cells as close as possible." The stone clause was Flinn's, and that is the one that raised the rumpus. Flinn's quarry produced Ligonier block, and Ligonier block was specified. There was a letter from Booth & Flinn, Ltd., telling the architect that the price was to be specified at $31,500. A local contractor offered to provide Tennessee granite set up, a more expensive material, on which the freight is higher, at $19,880; but that did not matter. When another local contracting firm, however, offered to furnish Ligonier block set up at $18,000, a change was necessary, and J. O. Brown directed the architect to "specify that the Ligonier block shall be of a bluish tint rather than a gray variety." Flinn's quarry had the bluish tint, the other people's "the gray variety." It was shown also that Flinn wrote to the architect on June 24, 1895, saying: "I have

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seen Director Brown and Comptroller Gourley to-day, and they have agreed to let us start on the working plans and get some stone out for the new building. Please arrange that we may get the tracings by Wednesday. . . ." The tracings were furnished him, and thus before the advertisements for bids were out he began preparing the bluish tint stone. The charges were heard by a packed committee of councils, and nothing came of them; and, besides, they were directed against the Director of Public Works, not William Flinn.

The boss was not an official, and not responsible. The only time Flinn was in danger was on a suit that grew out of the conviction of the City Attorney, W. C. Moreland, and L. H. House, his assistant, for the embezzlement of public funds. These officials were found to be short about $300,000. One of them pleaded guilty, and both went to prison without telling where the money went, and that information did not develop till later. J. B. Connelly, of *The Leader*, discovered in the City Attorney's office stubs of checks indicating that some $118,000 of it had gone to Flinn or to Booth & Flinn, Ltd. When Flinn was first asked about it by a reporter he said that the items were correct, that he got them, but that he had explained it all to the Comptroller and had satisfied him. This answer indicated a belief that the money belonged to the city. When he was sued by the city he said that he did not know it was city money. He thought it was personal loans from House. Now House was not a well-to-do man, and his city salary was but $2,500 a year. Moreover, the checks, two of which are reproduced here, are signed by the City Attorney, W. C. Moreland, and are for amounts ranging from five to fifteen thousand dollars. But where was the money? Flinn testified that he had paid it back to House. Then where were the receipts? Flinn said they had been burned in a fire that had occurred in Booth & Flinn's office. The judge found for Flinn, holding that it had not been proven that Flinn knew the checks were for public money, nor that he had not repaid the amount.

Chris Magee's Business

As I have said before, however, unlawful acts were exceptional and unnecessary in Pittsburg. Magee did not steal franchises and sell them. His councils gave them to him. He and the busy Flinn took them, built railways, which Magee sold and bought and financed and conducted, like any other man whose successful career is held up as an example for young men. His railways, combined into the Consolidated Traction Company, were capitalized at $30,000,000. The public debt of Pittsburg is about $18,000,000, and the profit on the railway building of Chris Magee would have wiped out the debt. "But you must remember," they say in the Pittsburg banks, "that Magee took risks, and his profits are the just reward of enterprise." This is business. But politically speaking it was an abuse of the powers of a popular ruler for Boss Magee to give to Promoter Magee all the streets he wanted in Pittsburg at his own terms: forever, and nothing to pay. There was scandal in Chicago over the granting of charters for twenty-eight and fifty years. Magee's read: "for 950 years," "for 999 years," "said Charter is to exist a thousand years," "said Charter is to exist perpetually," and the councils gave franchises for the "life of the Charter." There is a legend that Fred Magee, a waggish brother of Chris, put these phrases into these grants for fun, and no doubt the genial Chris saw the fun of it. I asked if the same joker put in the car tax, which is the only compensation the city gets for the use forever of its streets; but it was explained that that was an oversight. The car tax was put upon the old horse-cars, and came down upon the trolley because, having been left unpaid, it was forgotten. This car tax on $30,000,000 of property amounts to less than $15,000 a year, and the companies have until lately been slow about paying it. During the twelve years succeeding 1885 all the traction companies together paid the city $60,000. While the horse vehicles in 1897 paid $47,000, and bicycles $7,000, the Consolidated Traction Company* (C. L. Magee, President) paid $9,600. The speed of bicycles and horse vehicles is limited by law, that of the trolley

* All the street railways terminating in the city of Pittsburg were in 1901 consolidated into the Pittsburg Railways Company, operating 404 miles of track, under an approximate capitalization of $84,000,000. In their statement, issued July 1, 1902, they report gross earnings for 1901 as $7,081,452.82. Out of this they paid a car tax for 1902 to the city of Pittsburg of $20,099.94. At the ordinary rate of 5 per cent. on gross earning the tax would have been $354,072.60.

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is unregulated. The only requirement of the law upon them is that the traction company shall keep in repair the pavement between and a foot outside of the tracks. This they don't do. On the contrary, the city furnishes twenty policemen as guards for crossings of their lines at a cost of $20,000 a year in wages.

City Mulcted for Bridges

Not content with the gift of the streets, the ring made the city work for the railways. The building of bridges is one function of the municipality as a servant of the traction company. Pittsburg is a city of many bridges, and many of them were built for ordinary traffic. When the Magee railways went over them some of them had to be rebuilt. The company asked the city to do it, and despite the protests of citizens and newspapers, the city rebuilt iron bridges in good condition and of recent construction to accommodate the tracks. Once some citizens applied for a franchise to build a connecting line along what is now part of the Bloomfield route, and by way of compensation offered to build a bridge across the Pennsylvania tracks for free city use, they only to have the right to run their cars on it. They did not get their franchise. Not long after Chris Magee (and Flinn) got it, and they got it for nothing; and the city built this bridge, rebuilt three other bridges over the Pennsylvania tracks, and one over the Junction Railroad — five bridges in all, at a cost of $160,000!

What the People Did About It

Canny Scots as they were, the Pittsburgers submitted to all this for a quarter of a century, and some $34,000 has been subscribed toward the monument to Chris Magee. This sounds like any other well-broken American city; but to the credit of Pittsburg be it said that there never was a time when some few individuals were not fighting the ring. David D. Bruce was standing for good government way back in the fifties. Oliver McClintock and George W. Guthrie we have had glimpses of, struggling, like John Hampden, against their tyrants; but always for mere justice and in the courts, and all in vain, till in 1895 their exposures began to bring forth signs of public feeling, and they ventured to appeal to the voters, the sources of the bosses' power. They enlisted the venerable Mr. Bruce and a few other brave men, and together called a mass-meeting. A crowd gathered. There were not many prominent men there, but evidently the people were with them, and they then and there formed the Municipal League, and launched it upon a campaign to beat the ring at the February election, 1896.

A committee of five was put in charge — Bruce, McClintock, George K. Stevenson, Dr. Pollock, and Otto Heeren — who combined with Mr. Guthrie's sterling remnant of the Democratic party on an independent ticket, with Mr. Guthrie at the head for Mayor. It was a daring thing to do, and they discovered then what we have discovered in St. Louis and Minneapolis. Mr. Bruce told me that, after their mass-meeting, men who should have come out openly for the movement approached him by stealth and whispered that he could count on them for money if he would keep secret their names. "Outside of those at the meeting," he said, "but one man of all those that subscribed would let his name appear. And men who gave me information to use against the ring spoke themselves for the ring on the platform." Mr. McClintock in a paper read before a committee of the National Municipal League says: "By far the most disheartening discovery, however, was that of the apathetic indifference of many representative citizens — men who from every other point of view are deservedly looked upon as model members of society. We found that prominent merchants and contractors who were 'on the inside,' manufacturers enjoying special municipal privileges, wealthy capitalists, brokers and others who were holders of the securities of traction and other corporations, had their mouths stopped, their convictions of duty strangled, and their influence before and votes on election day preëmpted against us. In still another direction we found that the financial and political support of the great steam railroads and largest manufacturing corporations, controlling as far as they were able the suffrages of their thousands of employees, were thrown against us, for the simple reason, as was frankly explained by one of them, that it was much easier to deal with a boss in promoting their corporate interests than to deal directly with the people's representatives in the municipal

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legislature. We even found the directors of many banks in an attitude of cold neutrality, if not of active hostility, toward any movement for municipal reform. As one of them put it, 'if you want to be anybody, or make money in Pittsburg, it is necessary to be in the political swim and on the side of the city ring.'"

This is corruption, but it is called "good business," and it is worse than politics.

The Break Between Quay and Magee

It was a quarrel among the grafters of Minneapolis that gave the grand jury a chance there. It was a low row among the grafters of St. Louis that gave Joseph W. Folk his opening. And so in Pittsburg it was in a fight between Quay and Magee that the Municipal League saw its opportunity.

To Quay it was the other way around. The rising of the people of Pittsburg was an opportunity for him. He and Magee had never got along well together, and they were falling out and having their differences adjusted by Flinn and others every few years. The "mutual business advantage" agreement was to have closed one of these rows. The fight of 1895-96 was an especially bitter one, and it did not close with the "harmony" that was patched up. Magee and Flinn and Boss Martin of Philadelphia set out to kill Quay politically, and he, driven thus into one of those "fights for his life" which make his career so interesting, hearing the grumbling in Philadelphia and seeing the revolt of the citizens of Pittsburg, stepped boldly forth upon a platform for reform, especially to stop the "use of money for the corruption of our cities." From Quay this was comical, but the Pittsburgers were too serious to laugh. They were fighting for their life, too, so to speak, and the sight of a boss on their side must have encouraged those business men who "found it easier to deal with a boss than with the people's representatives." However that may be, a majority of the ballots cast in February, 1896, were against the ring.

Counted Out by the Ring

This isn't history. According to the records the reform ticket was defeated by about 1,000 votes. The returns up to one o'clock on the morning after election showed George W. Guthrie far ahead for Mayor; then all returns ceased suddenly, and when the count came in officially a few days later the ring had won. But besides the *prima facie* evidence of fraud, the ringsters afterward told in confidence not only that Mr. Guthrie was counted out, but how it was done. Mr. Guthrie's appeal to the courts, however, for a recount was denied. The courts held that the secret ballot law forbade the opening of the ballot boxes!

Thus the ring held Pittsburg — but not the Pittsburgers. They saw Quay in control of the Legislature, Quay, the reformer, who would help them. So they drew a charter for Pittsburg which would restore the city to the people. Quay saw the instrument, and he approved it; he promised to have it passed. The League, the Chamber of Commerce, and other representative bodies, all encouraged by the outlook for victory, sent to Harrisburg committees to urge their charter, and their orators poured forth upon the Magee-Flinn ring a flood of, not invective, but facts, specifications of outrage, and the abuse of absolute power. Their charter went booming along through its first and second readings, Quay and the Magee-Flinn crowd fighting inch by inch. All looked well, when suddenly there was silence. Quay was dealing with his enemies, and the charter was his club. He wanted to go back to the Senate, and he went. The Pittsburgers saw him elected, saw him go, but their charter they saw no more. And such is the State of Pennsylvania that this man who did this thing to Pittsburg, and has done the like again and again to all cities and all interests — even politicians — he is the boss of Pennsylvania to-day!

The good men of Pittsburg gave up, and for four years the essential story of the government of the city is a mere thread in the personal history of the quarrels of the bosses in State politics. Magee wanted to go to the United States Senate, and he had with him Boss Martin and John Wanamaker of Philadelphia, as well as his own Flinn. Quay turned on the city bosses, and, undermining their power, soon had Martin beaten in Philadelphia. To overthrow Magee was a harder task, and Quay might never have accomplished it had not Magee's health failed, causing him to be much away. Pittsburg was left to Flinn, and his masterfulness, unmitigated by Magee, made trouble. The crisis came out of a

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row Flinn had with his Director of Public Works, E. M. Bigelow, a man as dictatorial as Flinn himself. Bigelow threw open to competition certain contracts. Flinn, in exasperation, had the councils throw out the director and put in his place a man who restored the old specifications.

Enter Tom Bigelow

This enraged Thomas Steele Bigelow, E. M. Bigelow's brother, and another nephew of old Squire Steele. Tom had an old grudge against Magee, dating from the early days of traction deals. He was rich, he knew something of politics, and he believed in the power of money in the game. Going straight to Harrisburg, he took charge of Quay's fight for Senator, spent his own money and won; and he beat Magee, which was his first purpose.

But he was not satisfied yet. The Pittsburgers, aroused to fresh hope by the fight of the bosses, were encouraged also by the news that the census of 1900 put a second city, Scranton, into "cities of the second class." New laws had to be drawn for both. Pittsburg saw a chance for a good charter. Tom Bigelow saw a chance to finish the Magee-Flinn ring, and he had William B. Rogers, a man whom the city trusted, draw the famous "Ripper Bill!" This was a good charter, concentrating power in the Mayor, but changes were introduced into it to enable the Governor to remove and appoint Mayors, or Recorders, as they were to be called, at will until April, 1903, when the first elected Recorder was to take office. This was Bigelow's device to rid Pittsburg of the ring office holders. But Magee was not dead yet. He and Flinn saw Governor Stone, and when the Governor ripped out the ring Mayor, he appointed as Recorder, Major A. M. Brown, a lawyer well thought of in Pittsburg.

Major Brown, however, kept all but one of the ring heads of the departments. This disappointed the people; it was a defeat for Bigelow; for the ring it was a triumph. Without Magee, however, Flinn could not hold his fellows in their joy, and they went to excesses which exasperated Major Brown and gave Bigelow an excuse for urging him to action. Major Brown suddenly removed the heads of the ring and began a thorough reorganization of the government. This reversed emotions, but not for long. The ring leaders saw Governor Stone again and he ripped out Bigelow's Brown and appointed in his place a ring Brown. Thus the ring was restored to full control under a charter which increased their power.

Second Rise of Pittsburg

But the outrageous abuse of the Governor's unusual power over the city incensed the people of Pittsburg. A postscript which Governor Stone added to his announcement of the Recorder did not help matters; it was a denial that he had been bribed. The Pittsburgers had not heard of any bribery, but the postscript gave currency to a definite report that the ring—its banks, its corporations, and its bosses—had raised an enormous fund to pay the Governor for his interference in the city, and this pointed the intense feelings of the citizens. They prepared to beat the ring at an election to be held in February, 1902, for Comptroller and half of the councils. A Citizens' party was organized. The campaign was an excited one; both sides did their best, and the vote polled was the largest ever known in Pittsburg. Even the ring made a record. The citizens won, however, and by a majority of 8,000.

This showed the people what they could do when they tried, and they were so elated that they went into the next election and carried the county—the stronghold of the ring. But they now had a party to look out for, and they did not look out for it. They neglected it just as they had the city. Tom Bigelow knew the value of a majority party: he had appreciated the Citizens' from the start. Indeed he may have started it. All the reformers know is that the committee which called the Citizens' Party into existence was made up of twenty-five men—five old Municipal Leaguers, the rest a "miscellaneous lot." They did not bother then about that. They knew Tom Bigelow, but he did not show himself, and the new party went on confidently with its passionate work.

When the time came for the great election, that for Recorder this year, the citizens woke up one day and found Tom Bigelow the boss of their party. How he came there they did not exactly know; but there he was in full possession, and there with him was the "miscellaneous lot" on the committee. Moreover, Bigelow

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was applying with vigor regular machine methods. It was all very astonishing but very significant. Magee was dead; Flinn's end was in sight; but there was the Boss, the everlasting American Boss, as large as life. The good citizens were shocked; their dilemma was ridiculous, but it was serious too. Helpless, they watched. Bigelow nominated for Recorder a man they never would have chosen. Flinn put up a better man, hoping to catch the citizens, and when these said they could see Flinn behind his candidate, he said, "No; I am out of politics. When Magee died I died politically, too." Nobody would believe him. The decent Democrats hoped to retrieve their party and offer a way out, but Bigelow went into their convention with his money and the wretched old organization sold out. The smell of money on the Citizens' side attracted to it the grafters, the rats from Flinn's sinking ship; many of the corporations went over, and pretty soon it was understood that the railroads had come to a settlement among themselves and with the new boss, on the basis of an agreement said to contain five specifications of grants from the city. The temptation to vote for Flinn's man was strong, but the old reformers seemed to feel that the only thing to do was to finish Flinn now and take care of Tom Bigelow later. This view prevailed and Tom Bigelow won. This is the way the best men in Pittsburg put it: "We have smashed a ring and we have wound another around us. Now we have got to smash that."

There is the spirit of this city as I understand it. Craven as it was for years, corrupted high and low, Pittsburg did rise; it shook off the superstition of partisanship in municipal politics; beaten, it rose again; and now, when it might have boasted of a triumph, it saw straight: a defeat. The old fighters, undeceived and undeceiving, humiliated but undaunted, said simply: "All we have got to do is to begin all over again." Meanwhile, however, Pittsburg has developed some young men, and with an inheritance of this same spirit, they are going to try out in their own way. The older men undertook to save the city with a majority party and they lost the party. The younger men have formed a Voters' Civic League, which proposes to swing from one party to another that minority of disinterested citizens which is always willing to be led, and thus raise the standard of candidates and improve the character of regular party government. Tom Bigelow intended to capture the old Flinn organization, combine it with his Citizens' party, and rule as Magee did with one party, a union of all parties. If he should do this, the young reformers would have no two parties to choose between; but there stand the old fighters ready to rebuild a Citizens' party under that or any other name. Whatever course is taken, however, something will be done in Pittsburg, or tried, at least, for good government, and after the cowardice and corruption shamelessly displayed in other cities, the effort of Pittsburg is a spectacle good for American self-respect, and its sturdiness a promise for poor old Pennsylvania.

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WAIFS OF THE STREET

BY

ERNEST POOLE

ILLUSTRATED BY FRANK E. SCHOONOVER

WE all glance in passing at the shrewd little newsboys, peddlers, messengers, and bootblacks that swarm by day and night through every crowded street of busy New York. We catch only a glimpse. The paper is sold in a twinkling, and like a flash the little urchin is off through the crowd. We admire his tense energy, his shrewd, bright self-reliance. We hear of newsboys who in later life have risen high; and we think of street work, if we think of it at all, as a capital school for industry and enterprise. Those who follow deeper are forced to a directly opposite conclusion. The homeless, the most illiterate, the most dishonest, the most impure — these are the finished products of child street work. They are the minority of its workers. But this is only because the greater number stay but a few years, and so leave before thoroughly trained to the service. It is of the finished products that I wish mainly to write. They poison the rest, for in the street morals spread, like a new slang word, with amazing rapidity. And what is true of hundreds applies in some degree to most of the recruits around them.

The main characteristic of street work is its unwholesome irregularity. The work is almost wholly dependent on the crowds in the street, and is shaped to meet their irregular tastes and habits. The crowd pays best, and pays most carelessly, at night. In cold or rainy weather business drops almost to the vanishing point. It comes up with a rush in every time of excitement, for excitement, good or bad, is what street work is built on. This is especially true of the messenger service. Messenger boys are the most irregular of all street workers. One of the large New York companies employs one thousand boys at a time, but employs six thousand during the year. The night shift seems generally the most popular. Night messengers do all-night work between all-night houses and all-night people — some every week, some alternate weeks, some in four-hour shifts, and some twelve hours at a stretch. In one office of nineteen boys the oldest was sixteen, the youngest looked barely twelve. They went on at eight o'clock at night, and I found them still there at ten the next morning. It is the business of their manager to employ just enough boys to keep them all on the street all through the night.

For many this nervous irregular life is sustained and poisoned by hastily bolted meals, with often double a man's portion of coffee, cigars, and cigarettes. Down near Newspaper Row there is one tiny stand alone where two hundred boys bolt frankfurters and coffee between six and eight in the evening. The push-cart near by is run by a darky called "Lemonade Bill," who claims to sell two thousand waffles a day, and is an authority on street boy diet. He tells me they seldom bother about meals, but eat "mos'ly always" — the messengers between messages, the newsboys between editions. The saloon free lunches are also heavily drawn upon — "swiped" generally, for I know hardly a case of boys below sixteen who drink. A certain benevolent old lady from uptown was passing the other day one of these "dens of iniquity" when a ten-year-old bootblack slid out, having just lunched successfully. When asked the stock questions he told her pathetically that he was only washing his hands, and that this saloon was the only place in the district where a boy could keep himself clean.

Smoking is almost universal, and coffee is used to an amazing excess. I know over a hundred boys who average at least three huge bowls each night, and some who often drink six at supper. In thousands of cases, too, the work makes the sleep irregular. Several hundred at least sleep all

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"The work is almost wholly dependent on the crowds in the street."

night on the streets, in stables, condemned buildings, and halls of tenements, waiting until after midnight when the lights are all out. Some become prosperous and take furnished rooms, on the doors of which their waggish comrades leave inscriptions like these: "Butts—The Boy Detective," "Alone in London," "The Dead Sleeper," and "One Lung Pete."

Irregular work brings irregular pay. Newsboys get their papers on credit, are not forced to save for the next day's business, and so keep in debt most of the time. Messenger boys do a large side business in tips. The peddlers and bootblacks are paid on the spot. All classes have ready money—some in copper, some in silver—and reckless spending is a most natural result. For this the show is the main attraction. I know one "Lifty" who went the first five nights running to "Tracy, the Outlaw." "Old Sleuth" was another great favorite. At the Newsboys' Home they tell of one ten-year-old youngster who drew from the Lodging House Bank his savings, two dollars in all, and started out Saturday night, ragged and barefoot, to purchase clothes. He returned in an hour, still ragged and barefoot, his money all gone, but proudly wearing a gorgeous yellow necktie, and a handsome pair of green kid gloves.

The street's improvidence is a natural result of its irregularity. Gambling and improvidence go together. Most street workers are inveterate players at the game of "craps." This whiles away the time between the irregular working periods, and often runs well up into the dollars. In one of the large messenger offices on Broadway it is common for boys to lose the entire week's earnings in the hall and stairway before reaching the street. The ethics of the game are often strangely confused. On the one hand the winner at high play is not expected to leave without giving to each of his companions enough to "stake" them in the game which continues, and yet this same generous winner will often use loaded dice without the slightest compunction. It is the bluff that counts. There

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"Hastily bolted meals, with often double a man's portion of coffee, cigars, and cigarettes."

is a certain merchant in the city who makes a special business of loading dice. He is largely patronized by street boys.

Betting on the races is common among all street workers. They may be found in crowds at the summer race tracks, and over a hundred have become 'touts" of regular standing. "The Kid" is an extreme type. He is Italian, sixteen years old, shrewd, bright, and stunted to the last degree. Every one likes him. He became a graduate at twelve from the newspaper business, and sells now only at leisure intervals. These last four years he has been a "tout" at the races. He starts in April, and follows the horses from Morris Park, making the regular rounds to Washington, Saratoga, and the rest, returning to New York late in the autumn. He began by making books among the newsboys, but has advanced now to the same work at the track. He sells tips, too, generally on the street cars. Night after night his roommate used to be awakened by the "Kid," out on the floor in his sleep, lashing imaginary horses, and panting, "Go on—d——n yer—go on—go on!"

On all the freedom and irregularity of street life leave their marks in some degree. At one large department store I found that of sixty-two cash boys nineteen had been messengers or newsboys, but only three of these had been there over two months. Seven had been both messengers and newsboys. One had served as bootblack, messenger, newsboy, and peddler; later as assistant to a junkman, next to a dentist, and now at seventeen he was cash boy at $2.50 a week. He had held the position ten days. It is the same constant thirst for change that Mr. Heig has combated so long and so well at the Newsboys' Home down near Newspaper Row. Most of his boys have formerly been street workers, but by untiring effort he has secured for most of them other employment. Thirty per cent. of these lose their places almost immediately, while the majority of the rest are frequently changing. They have always their old street work to fall back on. Their average age is seventeen; their average wages, four dollars a week.

Traveling is common among all street workers. The later lives of some are scattered to the winds by this unnatural "Wanderlust," as the Germans call it. It was so in the case of "Jimmy the Devil." Jimmy began selling papers at five. He had no home, and soon earned well his right to be called "The Devil." It was at the age of six that he first shook the Bowery dust from the holes in his shoes, and crossed as a stowaway to England. He blacked boots on the voyage. Between the ages of six and twelve he beat his way from one port to another through England and the Continent, making flying trips "home" at intervals. At twelve he met two homesick little "Johnny Bulls" on the Bowery, and generously offered to see them back as stowaways to Liverpool. He left them in England, and went himself to Edinburgh; thence, stealing rides, to London and to Portsmouth, where he hid on board a troop-ship bound for the East. He was put off at Malta, boarded a man-o'-war, and was again set off at Alexandria. On the next troop-ship he made friends with an Englishwoman, passed himself off as her son, and so made an extended trip through Chinese and East Indian waters. At last he returned the same way to England, thence across to New Brunswick, and so

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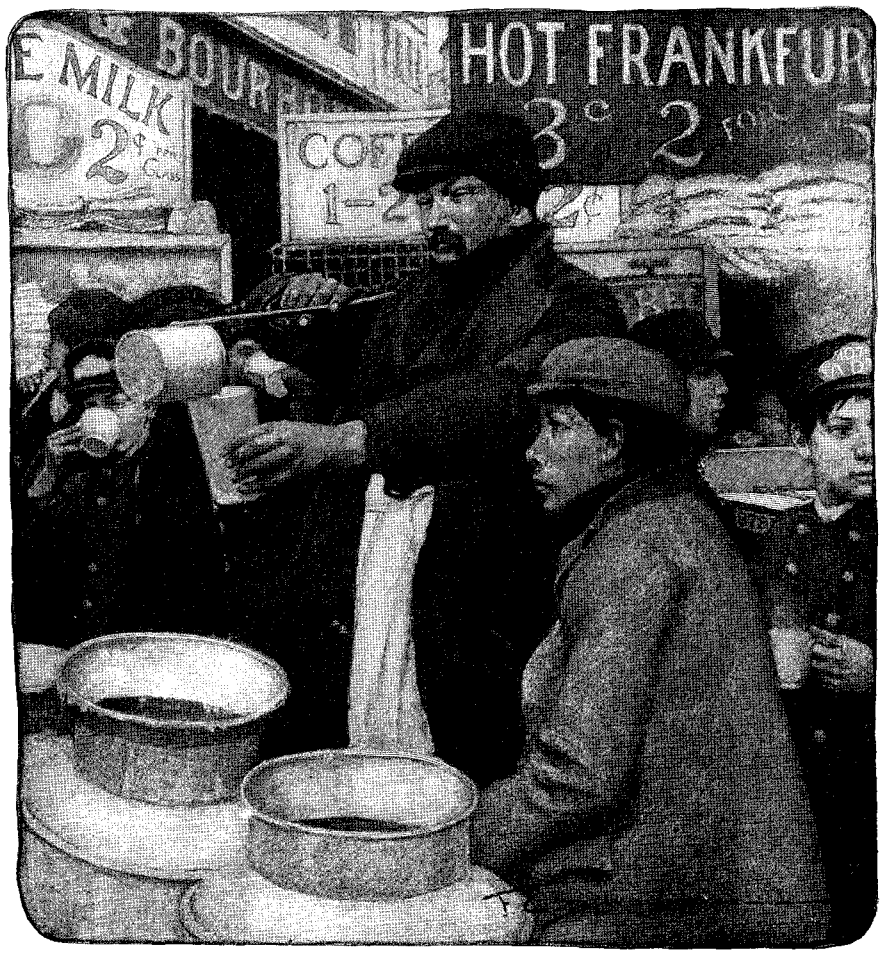
beat his way back "home" to the Bowery. A few weeks later he was off to San Francisco.

To offset this extreme irregularity street work gives no useful training for later trade or business. Out of the thousands of messenger boys only a very small per cent. become operators. Few bootblacks come to have stands of their own. All are constantly pushed on by the thousands of new-comers, and the street gives later work to only a small per cent. of these thousands. Newsboys do not become reporters. An editor of one large New York daily told me he knew of not a single instance. Some of the brightest win good positions in the newspaper delivery departments, others on wagons, in factories, and in the markets. Many become office boys, and some find the excitement they love in the Fire Department, while others appease their restlessness as traveling salesmen. The messenger boys often find congenial employment as drivers of "night hawks." The best of them end as messengers on Wall Street. But even there it is rare to find one working up. Mr. Lefevre of the *Commercial Advertiser*, well known for his Wall Street stories, makes this statement: "I know hundreds of brokers' offices, but I do not know of one broker's clerk who began his Wall Street life as a messenger boy." The race track draws largely on street workers. The same is true of the variety stage and the prize ring. I recall the case of one boy who became famous in the latter profession. He had almost reached the height of his ambition, when some foul play in a Brooklyn ring lost him a five-thousand-dollar purse. He

"'Lemonade Bill,' who claims to sell two thousand waffles a day, and is an authority on the street boy diet."



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became disgusted, left the profession, and became a trainer in a Broadway athletic establishment. About the same time the Grand Opera Troupe arrived in New York. Maurel, the famous barytone, needed athletic exercise, and came under our hero's charge. So successful was the treatment that the trainer was taken later on the road, with a salary of fifty dollars a week, and at the end of the season went with Maurel to England. There he slowly worked his way up, and now owns one of the largest variety halls in London.

The street gives no training for any one of these various careers. They are won

"Smoking is almost universal."

by the greater mass of recruits whom the street has not ruined, but only handicapped. There are a few who fight their way up to even higher places, boys whose very restlessness helps them to rise. The newspaper story of some governor, judge, or lawyer, who used to be a newsboy, is familiar to us all. But those who succeed leave the street. Their influence is lost upon it. Not so the failures. The beggars, toughs, and criminals all remain to teach those who follow. The street is forever losing its successes and accumulating its failures.

Street work saps the strength of home influence. In some it wholly destroys this influence. In all it is a constant impelling force For its earnings first induce parents to send boys out on the streets, and later these same earnings give boys access to the gambling, cheap pleasures, and vice that make home seem so dull and slow by comparison. Child street work soon implants that amazing precocity and independence which is often so attractive, and which yet leads to so much harm. I heard it briefly expressed once by a youngster of twelve. He had made trouble at school, and his teacher threatened to report him to his parents. "Aw go on wid yer reportin' to me parents!" he indignantly rejoined. "I'm supportin' 'em bot'." On inquiry his importance was found to be hugely exaggerated. And this exaggeration is common. Upon it is built the popular notion that every street worker represents a starving, widowed mother. In reality it has been found by closer study that these earnings are not generally the essential part of the family income. No doubt they do often help considerably, but this help is terribly paid for by the complete ruin which child street work brings to hundreds of its workers. Often the "supportin'" grows irksome, and starts the common process by which a boy becomes wholly estranged from his home. First gambling eats into his earnings. He begins to lie to his parents about the amount. When this keeps on, they forbid him to come home without money. Then comes the first night out. A beating follows, and makes it only easier to stay out again. In summer this becomes a comfortable habit. When winter arrives, the majority take to sleeping at home again; but always with some the seeming freedom has become an iron habit, for which even the slight restraints of the lodging house are too severe. So the habit grows, and the summer's recruits move slowly up to the head of the profession. For them child work in the streets is an enemy to all home influence. It is the more an enemy because at first it seemed a friend.

The case is much the same with the day school Those who work all day, if not above school age, have but to escape the truant officers; for, unlike most occupations, child work in the streets requires no working papers. The truant officer has no factory inspector to co-operate with him. Often, too, the parents work against him, teaching the boys to lie about their age, and so to work all day or all night in the street, learning no lessons but the shrewd dishonesty it teaches. As for the thousands who work only outside school hours,

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their teachers usually speak of them either as ungovernable or backward. "Too little sleep and too much excitement," were the reasons most commonly given by some twenty school superintendents. Stupidity is not the cause, for a brighter, more attractive lot of youngsters it is hard to find.

At night school the street worker is rarely found; and the same is true in the trade schools, boys' clubs, and gymnasiums that have advanced recently with such amazing speed—thronged each night by thousands of working boys and girls in day school. There are one hundred and fifty of these boy centers in Greater New York, but through a circular letter I have learned that street workers are the rare exception. The few that come are wholly irregular. The reason is obvious. The street gives much of its work and most of its attractions at night.

The more manly side of these attractions I heard well expressed the other night by "the Skinner," a four years' recruit, aged ten. We were watching the automobile of the *Evening Telegram* race off with its midnight edition. "Gee! I wish I was the feller wot runs it." A deep sigh intervened. "He makes de biggest kind of money—an' he goes like h—l!" It was election night. I found him an hour later sound asleep on some iron steps. The *Journal's* last extra was coming out like Vesuvius not ten feet away. As I came up, "the Skinner" was swiftly aroused by his chum, who had emerged from the crater with *Journals* for both. These I purchased, to their huge delight, and we retired for a brief smoke to the steps near by. Both "Mick" and "the Skinner" sold until eleven on week nights and two o'clock on Sundays. I call them recruits, for both had been in school; "the Skinner" three years and "Mick" seven. "The Skinner" was still in the lowest possible grade; so was "Mick." The street at night was the only book they liked, and they knew it by heart. Its most vicious phases came glibly from their lips as mere matters of common interest. "The Skinner," as his pard confided, was feeling "bummy in the head." What little flesh he owned was constantly twitching, and his hands moved nervously as he talked. He had come from Italy five years back, and had been four years a newsboy. When we said good-night, Mick told me that whenever he was around I could count on reading head lines without expense. I thanked him, and left them at the Brooklyn Bridge. It was one o'clock, and they had stocked up for the last sale. All about them was a scene of bets being won and money spent, of horns and of yells from drunken men and women. What chance, I wondered, has the monotonous school-room or "the Skinner's" foreign mother and her tenement against all this? What a dull fool she must seem to "the Skinner."

It is this night work that brings boys inevitably in touch with the street's darker background. The background of the street is crookdom. Crookdom costs the people of Greater New York forty million dollars a year. It is the natural goal to which child street work leads hundreds of its workers—the minority who poison the rest. In them the influence of home and school is wholly destroyed. The irregular life has ruined them for any permanent trade or business. This background of vice and crime remains. It lies behind the lives of all street workers. What wonder that it makes all the lives of some?

"The street sharpens a boy's wits and makes a little man of him." This common notion most of us get from the glance in passing. It is true as far as it goes. The wits are certainly sharpened, but we fail to see which way they are sometimes pointed. The street is making a man of him—swiftly, but when the man is finally made he has long since passed from our attention. And if a failure, we lose all connection between him and the bright, attractive little newsboy who has taken his place. Among thousands of street workers there are hundreds of these failures. Joe —— is one. Ever since he can remember he has sold papers, and by twelve his wits were nicely sharpened. He had the game of "craps" and the "sweating-board" both by heart. He began now "raising the limit" and "loading the dice." He learned that no man is guilty until caught, and framed his morals accordingly. At twelve he was selling the late edition by the Brooklyn Bridge. It was found later that he had had a good home some two miles away, but his late night work made the lodging-house more convenient. He became a regular lodger in the houses along the Bowery. Meanwhile

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"He is sixteen, and stunted bodily, mentally, and morally to the lowest degree."

—being a sharp boy—he learned the common trick of "stalling." One little man shoves a paper, as though for sale, up into the face of a passer-by, whose vest pockets are thus hidden from his face just an instant. That instant is enough. The "fob-touch" is made in a twinkling. Joe was too slow in the process one night last year. He is now "doing time" on the Island.

Of the thousand messenger boys on Wall Street many are below fourteen, at the most impressionable stage of boyhood. They see dazzling fortunes made in a day and huge bets won by brokers at the races. Many become inveterate gamblers. And the habit, when acquired at this age, is not easily shaken in later life. The case of this one is not uncommon. He was unusually ambitious, worked hard two years in night school, while running messages in the day, and by this plucky preparation he secured a place in a Broadway office. In a few years he had worked his way up into a position of trust. But meanwhile the strongest of all habits, that of gambling, had returned. He lost heavily, and when an unusual chance offered, the temptation was too great. He did a year in the penitentiary, came out at twenty-three, and is now again in the messenger service.

At the New York Juvenile Asylum I found, through a special census taken by the teachers, that, of some six hundred boys between eight and fifteen, the majority had always lived on the street. These street boys were classed as workers, petty thieves, and loafers, though many had belonged by turns to all three classes. One hundred and five had worked as newsboys. Only one had worked on a farm. Among the offences were: petty larceny, seventy-seven; disorderly conduct, twelve; grand larceny, nine; assault, four; unlawful entry, three; and burglary, two. At the House of Refuge the superintendent told me that all his efforts are planned to undo the false morality which the street teaches its citizens.

This morality has been briefly summed up by one whose name is known to all street workers: "If any one gets caught with the goods he can take what's coming." Don't get caught is the motto. The other night I attended an impromptu musicale in the rooms of a juvenile gang of which I am a member. One of them was trying hard to impress upon me the honesty in his moral make-up. This hypocrisy was too much for "Buttsy," who was entertaining the company with that touching ballad, "Don't Drive a Nail in Mother's Face." The song ended abruptly. "Say," said "Buttsy," glaring

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"Most street workers are inveterate players at the game of 'craps.'"

scornfully at the hypocrite, "sposen a guy was ter come up der street—an' sposen de guy should drop a fiver on de sidewalk, is yer a fool or would yer swipe it? Yer would, yer know yer would. So would I. We're bot' crooks. Go on wid de pyanner."

This has its amusing side. It has, too, its grim reality. At the Newsboys' Home they search the clothes of all the newcomers. Here is a list of some articles confiscated: fifty knives and razors, nearly a hundred revolvers, several dark lanterns, a number of clubs and stilettos, a few old-fashioned flint-lock pistols, one tomahawk, and a score of skeleton keys and burglars' tools, besides numerous dime novels and cheap, vicious pictures. Mr. Heig was telling me the other night the tragic story of one little newsboy of twelve. He was stealing with two companions of eighteen in an office building when a watchman spied them, and blocked the way to the street. In an instant they had raced up six flights of stairs and out on the roof. A policeman had joined in the chase, and as they scrambled on over the roof tops through the cold winter's night the boy of twelve began dropping more and more behind. The pursuers, closing in, made him blind with terror. Suddenly, as they came closer, he saw his two companions just ahead make flying leaps across a blind alley from one gutter to another. He shrunk back a moment, then sprang out, and gave a shriek of terror as he felt his hands slip on the opposite gutter. An instant later he lay crushed and mangled on the stones of the court six floors below.

Late one night I met an admiring crowd of ten-year-old urchins listening with deep admiration to two young crooks of sixteen, who had taken ten dollars from a drunken woman of the town on the night before. This humorous "touch" was received with immense applause. It is a typical instance among the worst street workers, for more startling than all their criminal traits is their close and intimate comradeship with vice.

Street boys are, above all, curious and imitative. From several of those who know them best I have reached this average conclusion that among four hundred of these worst street workers eighty per cent. have loathsome diseases by fifteen. Many of these become special messengers in the Tenderloin and Chinatown. I give here the case of only one in many. He is sixteen, and stunted bodily, mentally, and morally to the lowest degree. For years he sold papers on Park Row. It is his business to run errands for some fifteen white women who are slaves to Chinamen and the opium habit. He is handy at cooking the opium pills. He is gradually

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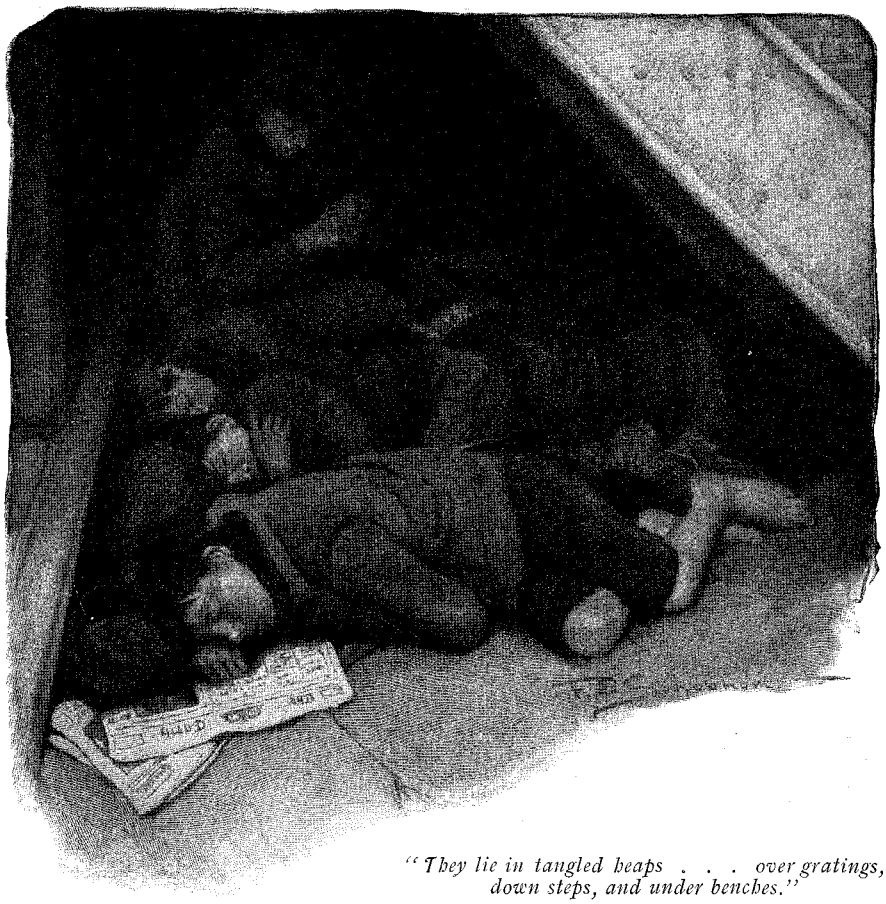

"They lie in tangled heaps . . . over gratings, down steps, and under benches."

learning the "habit." His last name I cannot give, for I promised my guide and his friend, the local undertaker, that I would not reveal it.

Go late to-night down through the narrow streets near Newspaper Row, and if you know the places where they hide, you will find over a hundred ragged little chaps, wholly dead to the world. Most of them sell papers. The late edition of the *Telegraph* is sold till after midnight, and the morning papers come out at three. Between twelve and two o'clock, one cold November night, I counted over sixty on two streets alone. They lie in tangled heaps of two's and three's, over gratings, down steps, and under benches. Their faces are white, cold, unconscious — like the faces of dead children. Some are wholly barefoot; all are foul and ragged. Every hour the policeman's dark lamp spies them out. They are stirred up — wake cursing — and move slowly on to other corners. Let us watch them more closely. They are coming now — five together — slipping noiselessly along in the shadow. They look about eight years old, but are really twelve. One of them is pointing at a little heap of humanity on a grating across the way. The others nod and close in silently. They bend over the sleepers, and work with all the skill of long experience. Not much of a haul — only a few cents from each — but there are a hundred others sleeping. They shuffle away silently. When the three o'clock papers come out, the sleepers begin to stir. It is then that the night shows what in daytime their shrewd bright wit conceals. They stagger up, blue and shaking from the chill that comes before daybreak. And so begins the day.

The homeless, the most illiterate, the most dishonest, the most impure — these are the finished products of child street labor.

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THE TRIUMPH

BY

ARTHUR STANWOOD PIER

ILLUSTRATED BY W. D. STEVENS

CHAPTER TWELVE

The Uninvited Guest

THE evening air had a penetrating moisture, and Bessie Robeson, as she walked by her brother's side, drew her scarf closer about her head.

"A light at the corner of Packer's lane!" Neal exclaimed. "It's evidently to be a very fashionable party."

"It's Sally's birthday," Bessie reminded him. "I wonder if any of the Nevilles will come."

"Is there any reason for supposing that they will?" Neal asked.

"No — except for what I saw when I was in the derrick the other day. And if Eleanor comes I should think ——"

"Oh, Neville's too busy with his campaign in Avalon. And can't a girl go anywhere alone, Bess, even if she is engaged?"

"It's funny she doesn't announce it," Bessie mused. "I guess you and I are the only ones that know, Neal."

"And we don't," her brother said.

"Well, when I see two people hugging and kissing each other I know what to call it," Bessie replied. "I must say I think it's quite enough for Eleanor to be the future Oil Queen without soaring above the rest of us in this way."

Neal listened absently to this prattle about Eleanor.

"I could have given her love and the best of myself," he thought. "But after all ——"

He had begun to realize that from a certain point of view he must always be regarded as a failure. This had been impressed upon him by a letter from one of his friends in the hospital. "You say you are going to stay in the village and be general utility man. Think it over. Your general utility man is the general futility man." "And your epigrammatic man is one who sees with a squint," Neal retorted. Yet he knew that such a girl as Eleanor must hold this friend's point of view. And he remembered his vow to achieve eminence; if, in after days, Eleanor ever recalled it, what a smile of derisive compassion for a man so eloquent and futile would twitch her lips! It was a hard thought for one who had always liked to shine; it indicated, too, that he was arriving at a conviction of hardness in the girl. Since he had left her in the midst of her defence of McGuire a streak of anger had been burning through his love; how she needed curbing and guidance! How gladly would he administer it! The anger did not detract from his love, but intensified it; yet anger and the dignity of the rejected man had kept him from her house.

And now, on his way to Sally Packer's party, he was wishing that Eleanor might be there and might give him some kindly look or word that would quench his smouldering anger, for he knew this ought not to survive the hope of love.

Sally Packer herself admitted Neal and his sister, grasping Bessie about the shoulders with bare brawny forearms, and pecking her in the usual way upon the cheek.

"We've been waitin' for you," she said, and then, "Oh, no, you ain't a bit late." Somehow Neal was glad to see that for once she was looking comparatively shapeless; it is an effect produced by a certain kind of all-white, fluffing, flouncing muslin dress. Her hair was "frizzed," she wore gold earrings and a necklace of ruby glass beads, but it was in vain that she strove for affectation; her eyes were too blabbing in their honesty, her forearms were too brawny.

While she was helping Bessie to lay aside

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her wraps at one end of the hall, Neal stepped into the sitting-room, where the younger members of the company were divided according to sex. He surveyed the girls first, looking for Eleanor. Arabella Clack and Jess Torson were seated at the piano, deeply interested in a photograph album. The three Stiles sisters were herded together in a corner, where they scrutinized a picture of Lincoln and the branches of maple leaves embosoming it. Similarly were Susie Brown and Emma Shook contemplating the companion picture of Grant on the opposite wall.

Neal joined the group of youths and men, to whom Will Bains was exhibiting the patent fasteners that attached his cuffs to his shirt-sleeves.

Then Sol Packer and Miss Emeline, and Blanchard and Slawson made a timely entrance from the other room.

"Here, what you young folks here for?" cried Packer. – "Get to work. Virginia reel; form up now, all of you. Kind of tough on Will Bains, Arabella, but I guess you'll have to sit down to the piano. Here, Will, you come here, and I'll tie a handkerchief on your arm; then we'll call you a girl, and Arabella won't be jealous."

"My, but you *are* the tease, Mr. Packer," said Arabella, fluttering to the piano stool and giving it a twirl. Then with the flat of her hand she brushed the shine off her complexion.

"Oh, now, Arabella, what you want to go and put a dull finish on your face for?" protested Packer.

"It's all right, Sol," said her brother Benny. "It polishes up of itself every half hour."

"You're just too mean, both of you," declared Arabella, with threatening upraised chin.

"I know a better way than your hand for wiping it off, Arabella," ventured Will Bains significantly, and there was a feminine titter and a masculine roar.

The two lines were formed for the Virginia reel, Will Bains with a handkerchief tied about his arm taking his place with the girls.

"Ho!" cried Packer. "Two more girls than men. Carrie Ploot, you step over here and play you're a man; I'll bandage your arm for ye. No, 'twon't do to have Will over here; 'twould make Arabella too mis'able, and she'd get all mixed up in her playin'. Now, then, I'm a-goin' to lead off with Mis' Slawson. Let her go, Arabella."

But with the first notes of the piano came a loud knocking at the door.

"There, wait a minute; that must be Eleanor Craig," exclaimed Sally.

She ran to the door and opened it; Ike Braddish stepped quietly inside. Sally fell back two or three steps in alarm, and her uncle and Jim Casey came hastily out into the hall.

"You wasn't expectin' me, Sally," Braddish began in a suave voice. "I suppose you didn't invite me because you thought I had night work and couldn't come. But we ain't drillin' this evening, and so I dropped round."

He looked at Sally with his steady, blade-like eyes, ignoring the two men.

"I ain't coming no further till you ask me," he said, with a smile.

He had arrayed himself carefully, and his air of stylishness, though somewhat cheap and spurious, was impressive. He wore a black flannel shirt, with a little white twist of a necktie; his mustache was defiantly curled and pointed, and his dark clothes had a look of homespun neatness.

Sally whispered for a moment to her uncle, while Jim Casey stood eying Braddish like an unfriendly bull-dog. Packer stroked his goatee and nodded, and then passed on the whispered word to Jim.

"You can come in, Ike," said Sally.

"Thank you all," Braddish answered, with reckless irony.

Packer stepped forward and inspected him for a moment in silence.

"Been firin' up, have ye?" he said, sniffing. "Well, you won't get no chance here to add to it. 'Twasn't the intention to see you here; but once in we ain't goin' to turn ye out without you give us cause. We think mebbe 'twill be just as well for you to stay and hear what's to be said."

"I hope I ain't struck a camp-meetin'," said Braddish.

"I doubt if you know just what you've struck," replied Packer, and turned his back.

"It looks like a Virginia reel," Braddish responded, undismayed, as he entered the room. "Shall we show 'em how to trot the alley, Sally?"

"Sally's dancing this with me," Jim said, abruptly.

"It ain't polite to take the words out of

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"Going down the middle."

a lady's mouth," Braddish reminded him. "Why, there's young Mr. Robeson, ain't it? Miss Ploot, you ain't a man; get over there where you belong, and we'll show 'em a thing or two."

"Beulah Stiles won't have a partner," demurred Carrie, though she seemed not at all loath to make the change.

"We can fit Beulah out with old Longlegs over there," and Braddish jerked his thumb at Will Bains. "He ain't makin' a very likely girl."

"He stays just where he is," declared Packer, with wrathful determination. He was not going to permit Braddish to step in and "run" the party. "If there ain't a place for you, Mr. Braddish, you will have to stand and look on."

Here Mrs. Slawson, getting alarmed, announced that she didn't care to dance after all, and Miss Emeline also decided to withdraw. Packer, upbraiding them for their defection, reluctantly fell out of the ranks; Slawson, who had been paired with Miss Emeline, remained and gave Braddish his opportunity. Carrie Ploot went over to the other side, Beulah Stiles was moved along until she was opposite Slawson, and the dance began.

Miss Emeline, Mrs. Slawson, Packer, and Blanchard, who was humbug enough to profess religious scruples against dancing, stood looking on.

"Gorry!" muttered Packer angrily after a time. "I don't know whether I can wish Eleanor success with her well or not, long as it's wishin' the same to that there scoundrel. Look at that, by Godfrey!"

Stupefaction made him dumb. Braddish, standing in the row of men while Bessie Robeson and Benny Clack were going down the middle, had drawn a whisky flask from his pocket, and with his head thrown back was drinking the raw liquor freely. Most of the girls looked frightened, but Carrie Ploot and Mamie Durgin laughed. In consequence of this laugh Bill Hill, to whom Braddish passed the flask, drank with an imitative devilishness. The next moment Packer was close behind him and Braddish, saying, quietly:

"Guests was not required to bring refreshments."

Bill Hill reddened, and returned the flask to Braddish, who shot a reckless laugh over his shoulder at Packer.

"Not knowing the terms of invitation," he said, "I thought best to come prepared."

"I won't stand seein' you do that again," Packer said, sternly.

Bessie and Benny had arrived at the "ladies' chain" figure, and Bessie was coming

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down the line, and being swung by each man in turn. Braddish stood ready and stretched out his hand to grasp hers. She sailed by, ignoring it, with a proud little chin high in air; she sailed by Bill Hill also, and gave her hand to Sam Straub. And to enable Benny Clack to overtake her, she let Sam swing her three times.

"That's aristocracy for you," Blanchard said to Packer, with delight. "That's blood, that is. The reg'lar Robeson blood."

It relieved the tension when Will Bains next came dancing down the middle as a girl. And when at last he ventured on the ladies' chain, the men hurled him from one to another with a hilarious vigor that worked his coat-sleeves up to his elbows and flung his reluctant, timorous feet high in air. His long hands grew red as peonies, his mouth gaped in a frozen, terrified grin, his huge carnelian cuff-buttons and his patent cuff-fasteners made a memorable display; yet in spite of all desperate efforts he kept his feet, and finally arrived in safety at the end of the line.

When the dance was finished, Braddish went up to Sally Packer. The last drink of whisky was beginning to affect him; his purpose and manner were becoming doggedly, monotonously persistent, his utterance was thickening.

"I'm goin' to have the next dance, Sally," he said.

"I don't know as we're going on dancin'," she replied, and Jim Casey continued to eye him with the steady, ominous patience of an unfriendly bull-dog.

"You wouldn't have give me the go-by like that flip little girl done, Sally."

"You hadn't ought to have brought whisky in here."

"But say, it's made me just right for dancin'. My feet are just keen for it."

Sally turned to Jim pleadingly, but he answered only with a stolid stare. In reality he was trying to make up his mind as to just when it would be proper to "smash" Braddish.

At the other end of the room Will Bains had been arguing with Arabella, urging her with the greater warmth the more she objected, "No, Will, I don't want to, it ain't time yet."

"Oh, yes, it is, Arabella, come ahead," he kept saying; and at last, when he had whispered in her ear, she yielded and rose from the piano stool. "Now you've got to back me up and yell it out, too," he warned her; and she murmured in distress, "Oh, Will!"

The attention of all the others was suddenly arrested by the spectacle of this pair standing at one end of the room and swinging clasped hands back and forth. And Will shouted: "Now, then, Arabella — one, two, three — !" and they both chanted in unison, "We want you all to know — that we're — engaged."

The next moment amid an uproar they were overwhelmed by the rush of their friends. Packer leaped about on the outskirts, crying, "Hi, Arabella, hi!" and then began enthusiastically to tear down the maple-leaf decorations of his pictures of Lincoln and Grant. They were tied together with string in the form of large wreaths; and still shouting "Hi, Arabella, hi!" he forced his way through the throng, and put one collar about the girl's neck, the other about Will's. Then grasping both wreaths from behind in one hand and seizing Mrs. Slawson's arm with the other, he cried, "Fall in, boys and girls, fall in!" And the procession joined him in roaring out the chorus over and over —

"Time *to get* mar-*ried,*
Too *long have they* tar-*ried;*
Come *again, old man,* come *again,*"

while he drove the plighted pair zigzagging from room to room, round tables and chairs. He brought them to a standstill in the dining-room, where Miss Emeline had arranged on her red table-cloth pitchers of lemonade and cider and plates of cake.

"Pour out — pour out all," said Packer, rapidly filling glasses. "But when you get your drink just hold it a moment, so's we can all drink together."

The glasses were passed round. "Now, then, ladies and gentlemen, I call on you to drink to the health of this fortunately mated young team that I hold the reins of here in my hand. But pause a moment, if you will, please, when you get half through. Here's to them."

The audience drank respectfully, and only Carrie Ploot observed that Braddish resorted again to the whisky flask. And now this performance was beginning to lose its glamour for Carrie, and she turned away from him with disgust.

The glasses, half emptied, were held expectantly in air.

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"Now, ladies and gentlemen," said Packer, "these two young folks have kind of stolen a march on us. And what we was goin' to reserve till the end had better come now, to my thinkin'. This here is the day when my niece Sally is twenty years of age. That is one reason for her givin' this party. And the other is for me — her bein' too shy herself — to let you folks all know of her engagement to Jim Casey."

There was shouting and clapping of hands, but Packer held his glass aloft entreatingly. "Now, ladies and gentlemen," he said, "that snatch of a chorus just once again, please, and then we'll finish off this drink."

So he led them —

"Time *to get* mar-*ried,*
Too *long have they* tar-*ried;*
Come *again, old man,* come *again.*"

"And now the other verse!" he shouted, and went on beating out —

"Time *to get* mar-*ried,*
Don't *wait to be* car-*ried;*
Come *again, old man,* come *again.*"

Then they all drank.

Out of the silence, as they drank, emerged the scoffing voice of Ike Braddish:

"And all I've got to do at any time is just to whistle and she'll come."

There was a crash of breaking glass. Jim Casey had dropped his tumbler of lemonade and came rushing round the table at Braddish. But before he got within striking distance, Torson and Packer and Blanchard and Neal had plunged in to block him off, and in another moment they had seized Braddish and were hustling him toward the door.

"We will put him out *hard,*" muttered Packer between his teeth. "We will put him out to stay."

As the door was being opened, Braddish got one arm free and aimed a blow at Neal, who was gripping him by the collar. Neal dodged, and while Braddish was still unbalanced from the blow he was hurled down the steps. At the last one he stumbled and plunged forward, throwing out his arms.

"Sling him his hat," said Packer; and Blanchard tossed the hat down to where Braddish was slowly gathering himself up from the earth. Then the door was closed upon him, leaving him in darkness.

He rose silently and felt his knees, and then his elbows. He did not seem to be seriously hurt, but he was conscious that all the projections of his limbs were skinned and sore, and he began swearing his deadliest under his breath as he recovered his hat and started limping up the lane.

It was not his expulsion from the house that made him now ready for wickedness so much as it was the sense of defeat where he had looked for triumph. The thought that he would yet conquer the girl did not satisfy the lust for immediate

"'We want you all to know — that we're — engaged.'"

conquest that was hot in his befuddled brain; he went stumbling and cursing in the direction of Eleanor Craig's house.

As he climbed over a fence to make a short cut across a field drops of rain began to fall. In another moment it was raining hard and steadily. But the drops beating against his face did not cool his purpose. Instead, he began, with a clumsy drunken ingenuity, to see how they might aid it, and he went muttering to himself across the field.

He was dripping when he reached Eleanor's house. There was a light in the sitting-room, and also in one of the rooms upstairs. He rapped loudly, and in a moment Eleanor opened the door.

"Good-evening, Miss Craig," he said, as she peered out. "Can I come in for a few minutes out of the wet?"

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"'We will put him out hard.'"

"Oh, it's you, Mr. Braddish," she answered, and opened the door wide. "Why, yes, come in."

Then as he entered, and she saw his coat-sleeves and trousers stained and muddy, she said, "Why, you must have had a fall."

"I did," he told her. "Comin' across the field."

There was a fire in the sitting-room, and she told him to draw a chair up close to it.

"But I thought you were going to Sally Packer's party," she said.

"I was there;" he replied; "but I left early. I was thinkin' I would get a good sleep. And then I remembered I had left my pipe at the rig. So I cut across the fields to get it. And then it began to rain, and it was dark and I fell."

He recited this prepared statement with a laborious accuracy, and for the first time the suspicion that he had been drinking came to her; while he spoke his eyes had dwelt on her face with an absorbed yet strangely reckless concentration that made his speech seem the more parrot-like.

"I would rather be here than at Sally Packer's anyhow," he stated, with a rich deliberateness that left in her no doubt of his intoxication.

She had never before had to deal with drunken men, but she had an idea that they were like insane people, who must be artfully humored and persuaded. So, going to the window, she said, "I don't think it's raining so hard now. And I have an umbrella that I can lend you; you can bring it back when you come to work on Monday."

He rose, and she thought she had outwitted him, and that he was going. But he approached her only to say again, and the repetition seemed most ominous, "I would rather be here than at Sally Packer's."

He stood looking at her with the same reckless intentness, exulting in the prim little figure and the cheeks that had begun to flame.

"I want to tell you what I saved you from this afternoon. McGuire, he touched you a-purpose. He'd have been a-kissin' and huggin' you if I hadn't been there. I found it out afterwards. That was all a big joke about his touchin' you to become a better man. That's what I saved you from, and you'd ought to be thankful—for Arty's a rough one, he is."

"I am thankful," she answered, still hoping to humor him.

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"Then ain't you going to shake hands and thank me proper?"

"Oh, if it's just that you want," and forcing a laugh she gave him her hand. "Thank you, Mr. Braddish; good-night."

"I told McGuire," he said, holding her hand tight while she tried in vain to draw it away—"I told McGuire that if there was any kissin' to be done, I'd tend to it."

"You dare!" she flashed.

And then his eyes sparkled at her.

"Oh, you dare me, do you?" he said, with a low joyous laugh. "I ain't ever took a dare yet."

She struggled and struck with her free hand, but he pinioned it at her side, and then kissed her—brutally took his fill of kisses while she screamed, "Wilbur! Wilbur!" And when in a moment the boy, half undressed, stood frightened in the doorway, she panted, "The pistol! Shoot him!"

Wilbur turned and ran up stairs.

"I'll have to hug you a lot more for that," Braddish said, playfully. "And kiss you, too."

She did not speak; she could hardly struggle, for he held her arms in a deadly grip; she panted and endured, with her eyes on the doorway.

"Shoot him, Wilbur!" she cried. "Shoot him!"

Her brother came into the room and stood undecided, holding the pistol.

Braddish released her and turned towards the boy.

"That's all right, Wilbur; no danger now of hittin' her too," he said, with jaunty pleasantry. "Why don't you shoot? Didn't you hear what your sister was a-tellin' you? Of course you'd ought to shoot me, I've been a-kissin' her."

"You—you'd better get out of here," said Wilbur in a quavering angry voice.

"I do believe you're scared," remarked Braddish—"scared to shoot. Go on, give the gun to your sister, she won't be scared. I won't stop you; that's right."

The boy walked by him slowly, holding the weapon behind his back, as if dreading an attempt to capture it. Braddish looked on with an amused smile. Eleanor reached out her hand and took the pistol, and then Braddish faced her.

"Now, then, you can shoot," he said. "Go on, don't be scared, shoot."

She raised the revolver and aimed it at his breast; her hand was trembling, her finger rested on the trigger, her face was white and cold with determination. Braddish stood without flinching. And then she slowly lowered the pistol.

"Why, I knowed you wouldn't shoot," Braddish said, with the low joyous laugh that was the most insolent, hateful sound she had ever heard.

"I shall not wait to think it over next time," she warned him, with slow emphasis. "And I shall not have to send for a pistol next time. It will be at hand."

"Now, that's a good idea," he encouraged her. "But you'll be kissin' me before shootin' me, Eleanor."

"It will not be safe for you ever to speak to me again," she answered.

"It's more fun to do things that ain't safe," he replied. "And you're my girl just the same; you're going to be, mind that."

"Leave the house." She stamped her foot. "If I raise this pistol again——"

"Calm yourself, I'm goin'," he assured her. "I never go no further than this the first time with a girl."

He opened the door and laughed back at her over his shoulder; then he stepped outside, closing the door slowly behind him.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Eleanor and the Dog Don

Another sleepless night had fallen upon Eleanor. No sleep could come when she had so bitter a sense of personal degradation. Two men had held her in their arms and kissed her—two whom she did not love. If only Neal would come and take her in his arms and let her sob out her story!

She wondered at the bumptiousness of spirit with which she had repelled him. Now her humbleness was so great that she doubted if any other warmth than that of chivalry had inspired him in the offer of himself; she remembered that he had not spoken a word of love to her, he had merely stated his prospects and asked if he might be permitted to furnish her with a home. At the thought that it might have been only chivalry resentment flamed, yet even in the torturing thought she clung to him. He had been so safe, so wise, so forbearing, and at the last so daring for her, and she had

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repaid him with a flippant disregard and a foolish confidence in her worst enemy.

She lay in bed and writhed at the thought — "What a fool!"

Her simple-minded brute with possibilities — he walked now ape-like in her imagination; her good skilled workman, able with brains and hands — she shut her eyes and quivered. How truly Neal had known him!

Her acknowledgment of gigantic bumptiousness and folly, of Neal's patient tolerance up to the last ingratitude, her confession of a vacillating, weakly ambitious mind, and now her disgrace at the hands and lips of a ruffian, combined to bring into subjection her spirit that had before been contentious for its independence. For the first time a sense of her physical helplessness and her dangerous innocence appalled her. She lay, frightened by the horror of the evening, feeling herself exposed to the persecution of any wild and desperate man; yet how safe she might feel under the protection of her one brave, patient man!

And oh, what a hateful and conceited girl he must think her! And would he ever come near her again? He had said he must return to New York on the fifteenth of the month. Would he come to bid her good-by?

The Sunday morning dawned through drizzling rain. Then, while Eleanor and her brother sat at breakfast, the sun came out and the meadows and trees seemed suddenly to leap in the light and then to stand poised and brilliant, while the raindrops glistened over them. With the brightness of the day something of the girl's spirit of self-dependence returned. When the church bell began ringing, she locked the doors and windows and started with Wilbur to the village.

"'The pistol! shoot him!'"

That morning, except for Bessie and her mother, the doctor's pew was unoccupied. Eleanor sat at the small organ and led the singing. Jim Casey came booming in at the end of the first line of every verse, and then the others followed. To Eleanor, who had been hoping to see Neal, the service seemed dead; her thoughts wandered. Only when she observed Sam Sipe on the other side of the church did her mind quicken with a determined purpose.

She waited for him at the church door, from which he was almost the last to emerge.

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"Mr. Sipe, I would like to speak with you," she said. "I cannot have Mr. Braddish on my place any longer. You must discharge him and get another man."

Sipe's knobby little features contracted together, and he rubbed his chin.

"What's the matter with Ike?" he asked.

"He came to my house last night drunk and insulted me," Eleanor said, flushing.

"Oh, I guess he didn't go to insult you, Miss Eleanor. He wouldn't go to do that. What was it he done?"

"I needn't give you details. For one thing—he threw his arms around me and kissed me."

"Well, now," Sipe said, in a pacifying tone, "that's no more'n what most of the girl's round about like to have the young fellers do."

"We will not discuss that," Eleanor replied, with suppressed wrath. "I tell you, I will not have that man come on my land again. If you go on with the well, some one else must do the drilling."

"You're takin' a mighty high hand, you know," Sipe answered. "I'll do what I've set down to do in the contract—no more, no less; I'll give you an eighth of the oil, or three hundred dollars if it's gas. I ain't seein' that Ike has done nothing so terrible. He's a good driller; I give him the contract on the job; I can't turn him off for just nothin'. And good drillers ain't so plenty. Here the hole is near finished; Ike got a little drunk on a Saturday night; well, he hadn't ought to have done it, we'll say; but I ain't got nothin' to do with that. As for his kissin' you—mebbe, what with your running over to the derrick and all, you give him some encouragement, Miss Eleanor." He smiled at the wit of this innuendo.

She stood looking at him with flashing eyes.

"That is all you can say?" she asked.

"I don't know that there's any more," he answered, deprecatingly.

"You will keep Braddish on the job?"

He nodded.

"Very well, then," she said, ominously, and turning from him she walked away.

The menace that had flashed in her tone had been merely a pretence; she realized the futility of it and her own helplessness. Pride forbade her to go to any one with her story and entreat protection or aid. If Sipe would afford her no relief, she must rely for defence upon herself, and she must endure the man's presence. It would be for only two weeks longer; by the first of November the well was to be completed, under the terms of the contract. Then the men would depart, and she would live no longer in daily, hourly fear.

All that bright Sunday afternoon, gorgeous with the colors of mid-October, she waited in her house, hoping that Neal might come. She thought he might be leaving for New York the next day, or Tuesday at the latest, and it seemed to her that he could not go without giving her a word. But the afternoon passed, and no one came—a dull, void day.

After supper she read to Wilbur out of "Ivanhoe." At last she laid the book down and said, "Wilbur, I'm going to ask you to take a note for me over to Doctor Neal's. I'd like to get it to him to-night."

It was not so easy to write the note; she tried to make it only that of one good friend to another. If it should convey any other intimation to him, she would wish never to let him see her face again. After all, what she sent was merely this:

DEAR NEAL: Aren't you coming to say good-by to me before you go back to New York?

ELEANOR CRAIG.

After Wilbur had departed with the note she had misgivings. What *would* Neal think? But she hoped that when her brother returned Neal would be with him.

Wilbur returned alone.

"Mrs. Robeson said Doctor Neal and Bessie had gone up to the Nevilles' to supper," he reported. "I gave her the note. Go on and read some more, Eleanor."

So Eleanor read on and on, sore with the thought meanwhile that Neal would go to see Rosamond Neville and avoid her. She felt now she had sustained an indignity in sending the note; she was asking him to call and say good-by when he did not care to come.

During the night she awoke to hear the engine throbbing and to see the three torches flaring in the derrick. The men had resumed work. Then she remembered that it was not these two men, who came on at midnight, that she feared. And so she fell asleep again

The next day passed, with suspense

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darkening into gloom. Neal did not come, though she stayed indoors waiting. At noon Braddish and McGuire walked by on their way to the derrick, looking curiously at the windows. Later in the day Braddish came to fill his water-jug at the well; while he waited he stood facing the house, whistling seductively.

By six o'clock she was hating Neal and herself. She had prostrated herself before him, and he had spurned her.

When she heard the whistle of the seven o'clock train she thought, "He is taking that train to Avalon. It is the last that makes connections for New York."

Wilbur said to her, "I suppose it wouldn't be safe for me to leave you alone for a little while, Eleanor. Tom Stearns was going up to Avalon to-day to get a foot-ball; he asked me to come over this evening and see it."

"Yes," Eleanor answered, half humorously, half in earnest, "it's so early in the evening I shall be quite safe, I think. But don't stay too late, Wilbur."

The boy had been gone only a few minutes when there came a knock at the door. "They saw Wilbur go out," Eleanor thought, and she rose, trembling. She took up the pistol and went to the door.

When she opened it, Neal stood before her. She whipped the pistol behind her back, but not quickly enough, for she had displayed it to intimidate. And holding it, she was unable to give Neal her hand; she only said, "Come in, Neal."

He wondered what deviltry Braddish had been up to that she thus went armed to the door; he could hazard a bitter guess. But the thought that she had now acquired a protector kept him silent and outwardly oblivious. As she sat down, he pretended not to see that she was awkwardly disposing of something behind her chair.

He was not a good actor; Eleanor knew from the first that he had seen the pistol. But her pride would not permit her to volunteer an explanation; it trembled on her lips; but, unless he should call for it, there it should die.

"I got your note late last night," he said. "I should have come in earlier to-day, but I have been visiting patients. I think you can't have heard — I'm not going back to New York."

"No!" she said, in a tone that showed her amazement.

"No. My father is not at all well. In fact, he is very ill. My plans have been changed. I expect now to stay in Rehoboth."

"Oh!" she said, and she felt he was putting fresh indignity upon her. She had written him a frenzied sort of note in a hysterical thought of an everlasting farewell, and now he was telling her he was to be a hum-drum daily fact of Rehoboth life. He sat before her with a serene, handsome effrontery, showing only by the steadiness with which he looked into her eyes how conscious he was of her desperate occult operations with the pistol behind her back. And seeing through the pretence, he was unfeeling enough not to inquire into her distress, not to suggest or offer a remedy.

Vindictiveness sprang up in her. She began to detect in his handsome face lines of cruelty, impenetrability — a cold experimental character, which she had never attributed to him before.

"I am sorry that your father is so ill," she said. "But I saw him out driving only the other day."

"Yes, he still goes out," Neal answered. "But he is very ill. And he will never be any better."

"So you are to be a country doctor," she meditated after a pause. He bowed his head in acknowledgment, but his eyes dwelt on hers proudly, ready to meet the sneer that his former cock-sure boast deserved.

Yet somehow vindictive triumph did not flow. She found herself saying, and saying sincerely, "Oh, I am very sorry, Neal. You — you would have had such a splendid career! And your father, too! Oh, I am sorry, Neal!"

"Thank you, Eleanor," he said, gravely. "'Careers' are not the most momentous things ——"

"No," she agreed, yet at a tangent. "Episodes."

Neal felt that a kindlier spirit was prevailing between them.

"It was good of you to wish to see me before I went away," he told her. "Of course I should have come to say good-by — if I had really been going. I should have come anyway — except this anxiety about my father — and the work I have had to do ——"

"I didn't know of it at all," she said. "I'm so remote here ——"

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There was an unpleasant silence. Neal thought of asking the question about the pistol, hesitated, wondered if he had lost an opportunity to serve the girl. He made a desperate effort to recover it.

"How does the oil well get on?" he asked.

"It goes on down," she answered, carelessly. "In a few days now we shall know. So Mr. Braddish tells me."

Now Neal was silenced. He interpreted her last remark thus: For you, for the world in general, Mr. Braddish and I are on friendly terms. If I carry a pistol to defend myself from him, you are not to inquire into it. For one person only is such inquiry legitimate.

"I hope it will be oil," Neal ventured vapidly.

"Mr. Braddish is quite hopeful that it will be oil."

Clearly, conversation on the subjects of oil and of Mr. Braddish was not desired. But Neal's mind was troubled for the girl; the desperate, hunted look and posture with which she had flung open the door, holding the pistol at her side, were too significant, and could not be dismissed from memory. Yet now she sat answering him with calm eyes and a composure that defeated pertinacity.

He hovered a little longer on the edge of the subject, and then withdrew. She seemed unalterably determined to foil the spirit of investigation, and so to repel all possible offer of assistance.

When he had left her, Eleanor indulged in some cynical reflections.

"Yes," she thought, "it was just chivalry — not love. And now even chivalry seems dead. Well, I suppose I did nothing to keep it alive. He sat there and avoided asking me about the pistol — afraid, I suppose, that I would say something to revive the necessity for chivalry. But I would have died rather than have told. At least — oh, if he had really loved me he would have let me tell!"

And then, all in a moment, the unhappiness of self-pity was drowned out by unhappiness and sympathy for him. Poor, poor Neal! How grave he had looked and how sad! It must have been hard to give up the life for which he had been preparing himself — doubly hard when the sacrifice was compelled by the hopeless illness of his father. She could not believe that death was at hand in the family — that Doctor Robeson, of all men, her dear old friend, her father's dear old friend, had come to the numbering of his days. Yet that was what Neal had intimated. And how selfish she had been to reproach Neal for coldness and neglect when he bore this grief, compared with which her woes were trifling.

She wished she might have said something to comfort him.

Perhaps, though, he found consolation in Rosamond Neville's gayety.

She wondered if she had not the meanest, most suspicious disposition in the world.

The next morning Neal went to Avalon and purchased a young bull-dog of worthy but undistinguished parentage. It was a dirty gray in color, with black blotches; it had a firm unblenching eye, with what Neal conceived to be some depth of devotion; its chest hung massive between bowed legs, and its face, if not intellectual, showed that it was capable of acquiring a fixed idea. Neal gave instructions that it should be sent that day to Eleanor anonymously. Coming from Avalon, the gift would be attributed, of course, to Lindsay Neville, and would be, therefore, more likely of acceptance. Neal thought that Eleanor was a girl who would appreciate a good dog. He was sure that with this dog she would feel and be more safe.

She accepted the gift and accounted for it as Neal had foreseen that she would. The dog prospered in docility and affection. He leaped, thrashing with his tail, and licked his mistress's face and hands whenever she came near; he growled thunderously if a man from the derrick filled his water-jug at the well. Before long there was an opportunity to test his usefulness. McGuire strolled one afternoon across the field, trolling out unctuously the song that had provoked Neal's wrath. Eleanor issued from the kitchen door; the dog came springing at the length of his chain out of his kennel. The song had ceased; McGuire stopped near the well, uncertain whether to stand or run.

"See him, Don, see him," Eleanor said, holding the dog by the chain and pointing at McGuire.

The dog saw and was not favorably impressed, for he strained and growled.

"Now," Eleanor called, "if I should let him go he would tear you in pieces. If

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"'See him, Don, see him.'"

ever you make yourself obnoxious again, singing or any other way, I shall set this dog on you. The same applies to Mr. Braddish. You might tell him. Now, if you want water, take it and go."

McGuire filled his jug in silence.

The next morning, when Eleanor came down stairs, she found the dog Don lying dead — poisoned.

Upon the scanty evidence Packer, justice of the peace, decided that McGuire's guilt was not established. But Eleanor's testimony convinced him of certain facts; "for disorderly conduct in singin' a rybald song," Packer fined McGuire thirty dollars. And until Braddish raised this sum McGuire languished a day and a night in the "lock-up" — a vault under Blanchard's store.

A broken pane in his barred window exposed him to derision. "The canary bird in the cage; quite the sweet singer he is," so Blanchard performed the introduction to the customer that cared to stoop for a grinning look. When McGuire emerged, he told Braddish an affecting tale of suffering and privation. And for two stretches of twelve hours each the drilling had ceased.

When on the third day Braddish and McGuire again appeared at the derrick ready for work, Eleanor went to Sipe. She again demanded Braddish's removal; she included now in the demand McGuire.

"You know perfectly well he killed my dog," she said; "besides insulting me."

"I don't know nothing of the kind," Sipe retorted, roughly. "All I know is, we've lost two days' work, and I ain't goin' to lose no more, not for no young woman's whims."

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Neal Gives Advice

The three torches no longer flared in the derrick at night; the drilling ceased each day at sundown. If a man wished to smoke a pipe he retired to the engine house. No fire was lighted in the forge; not even a match was struck within the derrick. The reek of oil was strong about the place; the bailer came up half full of oil; from time to time the hole spat out pebbles greasy with oil. As the cable

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worked up and down, gas rose about it in thin vaporish puffs; putting a hand out, one might feel the blast that was strong enough to blow pebbles up from a depth of more than fifteen hundred feet.

On the morning of the thirty-first of October Braddish informed Sipe that it would not be possible to strike oil for more than twenty-four hours. Barring accidents, they ought to get down to the oil pool some time on the second of November.

"That's two days overtime," Sipe objected.

"That makes no difference. Go and get her to renew the lease."

Eleanor stood in the doorway; she did not invite Sipe to enter; she looked at him with calm eyes while he fumbled making his request.

"There will be no renewal of the lease," she said.

"You've got to; I've got the option; I come to ask just as a matter of form," he declared.

"There will be no renewal of the lease," she repeated, firmly. "If any of your men comes on my land after to-day it will be trespass."

"You think I'm goin' to quit when I'm within a few feet of oil!" shrieked Sipe. "You think after I've spent all the money on drillin' that hole you can throw me out without none of the profits? I tell you there's a law and an equity on this."

"I shall get some one else to finish the drilling," Eleanor told him. "If the well amounts to anything you can present your account for expenses and it will be paid. By the contract you would have no claim even for expenses. You have not lived up to your agreement. I should not mind this, but you have disregarded my wishes, you have allowed your men to insult me and to destroy my property; and I intend to close all relations with you at the earliest possible moment."

"Whose fault is it," said Sipe, "that the well isn't completed on time? If you hadn't throwed Ike and McGuire out of two days' work with your trumped-up charge about a dog, oil would be flowin' now."

"You misunderstand me," Eleanor replied, calmly. "I don't complain because the well isn't finished on time. I am merely pointing that out as your misfortune."

"And you misunderstand me and the law both," retorted Sipe, "if you think you can throw me off the premises. And you try it with any of your one-horse lawyers and constables down here and I tell you there'll be trouble."

With that he turned sharply and walked back towards the derrick.

Eleanor went up to her room, and taking her copy of the lease out of her bureau drawer, read it over carefully. She was sure that in the plainest terms it sustained her contention. After midnight of the thirty-first of October neither Sipe nor his representatives would have any right to come on her land.

But that they would come was apparent. She wished she might have advice—one man's advice, the old doctor's. He was the wisest man she knew. If he were not so sick—in another moment she was slipping on her coat; perhaps he would be able to see her.

It was an overcast autumnal morning, with dark clouds flowing wave upon wave from the west, and streaks of watery light between. A high wind blew, bending trees and sending the leaves scudding, combing down long slopes of grass and hurling ripple after ripple across the surface of the river, which lay sunless and leaden. Eleanor, clinging to her hat, head down, with skirts whipping about her ankles, battled against the lively air, and thus battling derived a more obstinate and unrelenting purpose for combat. She arrived at the doctor's gate with her lips tight-clenched.

Then, as she looked up, they relaxed suddenly, forming the gentle "oh!" of pity. At the piazza steps the doctor, a muffled figure of feebleness, was being assisted from his buggy. Neal and John stood to receive him; on the porch waited Bessie and her mother. With arms supporting him, his two boys helped him up the steps; Bessie held the door open; the convoy entered slowly and disappeared.

Eleanor's eyes filled with tears. "And I was going to ask him to listen to my troubles!" she thought. She turned where she had stopped on the driveway and started towards the gate. But before she had reached it there was a quick step on the porch, and Neal was running after her.

"Was there something you wanted.

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Eleanor?" he asked, coming up by her side.

She turned to him with her face still showing her emotion.

"Oh, Neal," she said, "I came to ask your father—I didn't realize—" She ended abruptly.

"If I could in any way take my father's place," Neal said.

She had a sympathetic understanding that he would like to try to take his father's place. And she was sure his advice would be good.

"The lease expires to-night," she said. "I have refused to renew it. Sipe says I cannot dispossess him. He and his men will come in the morning, I know. What am I to do?"

"I should think you could do one of two things," Neal answered, after a little thought. "If they resume operations to-morrow, you could call on Packer to issue a warrant for their arrest for trespass. Torson, as constable, would have power to take whatever steps were necessary in making the arrest. That might be your most immediate remedy."

"Then," said Eleanor, "that is the one for me; it must be immediate."

"Your other course," Neal proceeded, "would be, I think, to go to Avalon and secure an injunction from the court, forbidding Sipe and his representatives to go upon your land. I don't know how speedily you could get such an injunction; I suppose it could probably be served on them very soon."

"The first way is the better," Eleanor said. "It is more immediate."

"I wish you could get advice from a lawyer in such a matter," said Neal. "If Mr. Lindsay Neville were here—couldn't you let things take their course till he comes down from Avalon?"

"No. I shouldn't want to bother him."

"But the election will be over to-morrow." Neal could not see why she should speak of "bothering" Neville.

"It wouldn't do at all. Having them arrested right off—that's the best way. I wasn't sure that Mr. Torson and Mr. Packer would have the power to do it."

"I think," said Neal, slowly, "that to get an injunction against them would be the better way."

"Why?" she demanded.

"The other will mean an immediate resort to force."

"Force—that is what I want," she declared.

"Probable bloodshed?"

She quailed a little at the suggestion. "How do you mean?"

"I can hardly hope to convince you," he said. "Your opinion of Braddish and his men is so different from mine."

She thought this cruel and unfair of him—after he had seen her with her pistol, seen her in distress.

"I was only asking for your advice," she said, with a tremulous dignity. "I will decide if it is convincing."

The tremulousness moved him. He wondered savagely how Neville could excuse himself—fighting twenty miles from her when she needed a champion! His own blood was running so warm at the consciousness that now she was appealing to him that he feared the throb of it in his voice; he would not show her his heart, out of a high sense of what was due to the fortunate absent man.

"You are right; my remark was gratuitous," he said, coldly. "But I mean this: those men have no respect for the law as embodied in Packer and Torson. They submitted in the case of the dog because it was a small matter. But you try to dispossess them; it is not a small matter—and their arrest is not like the other—a one-man's job. I don't know but that there may be some legality in their contention that having so nearly finished their work they have a right to go on and share in the profits. That is why I wish you would consult a lawyer. Anyway, it is easy to see that they will feel they have this legality, and will defend their possession of the ground. Of course, Torson would find volunteers to help him make the arrest, for you have the popular sympathy. But for that reason Braddish's resistance would be the more vicious; he would feel that his personal enemies were undertaking to act as instruments of justice. And I believe that Braddish and McGuire are desperate men."

He paused, looking at her with his steady eyes, and she knew that he had been telling her the logical truth. But she asked:

"And how will it be different with an injunction?"

"Because that will be an order from a high

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"'Was there something you wanted, Eleanor?'"

county court, not from a mere local magistrate. It will be something they will probably respect. It seems to me it would be better to secure an injunction, even at the cost of waiting two or three days, than to have Torson call for volunteers among your friends and neighbors, with the possible result of sacrificing lives."

She burned with a passionate eagerness to ask him, "Would you be one of those volunteers?" Some thought of his too cautious chivalry sprang up in her to do him wrong, and she said:

"I think your advice is good, and I will follow it. But I would rather have heard such advice from some withered old man, propping himself on a cane, than from you, Neal."

Then, with an abrupt word of thanks, she left him.

Her manifest injustice did not cut him so much as a dread of his possible likeness to the old man of her picture; so excellent at prating, was he perhaps lapsing into a torpid senility? He recollected certain unworthy mawkish moments when he had mused on the piteousness of being resigned to life at the early age of twenty-eight. He feared he was on the verge of being inured to defeat. Now, the spark of her analogy kindled his spirits. He even glanced humorously on the advice she had scorned and accepted. "How sage I am!" he thought. "But it would be fun to clean those fellows out! I still owe McGuire one." He tapped the under side of his jaw with tender remembrance.

He dwelt on her injustice a moment whimsically. "She asked me for advice, not action. If I had only offered to raise a force of militia!" He admitted a virtuous feeling that he suffered for the truth—quite a pleasant feeling. As he walked towards the house he hummed:

"How pleasant is Saturday night
When I've tried all the week to be good!"

But Lindsay Neville was inexplicable.

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How could he remain away when Eleanor lived with a pistol in her hand? Admitting that he was in the climax of a desperate fight, making the most daring and exhausting campaign that had ever been known in Avalon, one could hardly excuse him. Probably Eleanor, wishing to spare him worry, had not informed him of the facts. "But let him stay away," Neal thought, with a swift exultation. "I will look out for her." Happiness flashed in him, because she had come to him for help and he had helped her, even though it was to be himself despised.

How sane Neal's counsel had been Eleanor realized the next morning when Braddish, McGuire, and O'Brien passed by her house on the way to the derrick armed with rifles.

In a short time she was aware that the drilling had begun just as on previous mornings. Half an hour later she took the train to Avalon.

At noon Neal was reading aloud to his father in the doctor's study when he stopped to listen to a thin shrieking noise. It deepened rapidly into a roar, a roar like that of a million simultaneous rockets, but continuing and increasing. In three minutes it became gigantic and appalling; it seemed to come from no direction, but to envelop the house, and to be in the very room itself. Bessie and her mother came running terrified into the room.

"Oh, what is it?" Bessie cried.

"Gas — it's gas, not oil," Neal answered.

He snatched up his hat and rushed from the house. People were ahead of him, running down the road. The vast wheezing roar filled the ears to shattering; with neither rise nor fall, with its infernal continuance and monotony, it seemed that ultimate sound to whose accompaniment all things might be reduced to chaos.

(To be concluded.)

THE ARGUMENT FOR THE DEFENCE

BY

GRACE S. RICHMOND

ILLUSTRATED BY BAYARD JONES

THERE were three of them, and between them they gave her a world of trouble. It was Nicholas who had dubbed them her orphans. Nicholas? Yes, he was her brother. That is to say — he was quite as much her brother as young Cheney and Brentwell and Tom Ward were her orphans. But he was a great comfort to her, as brothers, who do not make love to a girl, but who do things for her, and listen sympathetically to her opinions and her troubles, and help her to get rid of the really troublesome orphans from time to time, can always be.

Nicholas had made sand houses and snow forts with Roberta at one period of their history; at another he had carried her school books and escorted her to and from skating rinks and dancing classes; and now that college and law-school days were over and he was once more her next door neighbor, he had fallen into the old rôle, which he averred fitted both himself and the girl with the easy comfort of a pair of well-worn shoes.

"Which of the orphans is on your mind now?" Nicholas inquired that blistering July morning when he had overtaken Roberta after a hot hurry of a block and a half. She was frowning over an open note, which she now thrust quickly into its envelope. She looked up and smiled a greeting as he fell into step, but the puzzled frown returned.

"It's my oldest one," she explained,

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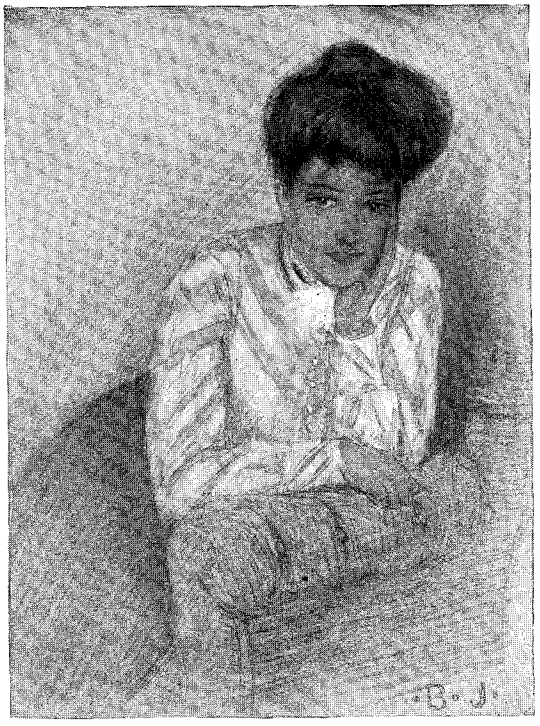

ROBERTA

with her eyes upon the thick envelope. "What do you think he wants now?"

"Oh, some little thing, I suppose," Nicholas guessed. "The earth, or a large share of it."

"He does, indeed. And I don't know what to do about it."

"Offer him one county in — er — Oklahoma."

"He wants me to go camping with Mrs. Lansing's party, and she's invited me. I don't just care for Mrs. Jack Lansing, Nick."

"Neither do I," said Nicholas, gravely. "Not a picayune."

"His sister will be there. She's an old school friend of mine, you know, and he's got her to tease me tremendously. Of course I see through that. The Rush Lansings will go, and they're really very nice, you know. Mrs. Rush keeps Mrs. Jack from doing too crazy things."

"Not always. Mrs. Rush can't always get up early enough in the morning to get ahead of her vivacious sister-in-law."

"The Everetts are going, and Marguerite Alling, and ——"

"And — incidentally — Mr. Earle Brentwell himself."

"Of course — when he can get away. He suggests that he may not be able to be there much."

"I hadn't heard of the rush of clients to his new office," mused Nicholas. "Well, Bobby, is that statement intended as a lure, do you think?"

"I'm not sure," said Roberta, slowly, and looking away. "What I am certain of is that it *is* one."

Nicholas laughed. "I think you would better go," he advised.

"Why?"

"Because you don't seem to care much about going. If I thought you really yearned to go I should say 'don't.'"

"Why?"

"Because summer camps are the most dangerous places in the world for girls with eyes of a certain shade of dark blue, edged thickly about with long and artistically draped black lashes."

"Why?"

"See here, Bobby," said Nicholas, with emphasis, "if you continue to ask me 'why' with that expression and that drawl, I shall be forced to say something which will cause you regret."

"Why?"

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"'Oh, so awfully glad to meet you, Miss Roberta.'"

He turned upon her, looked steadily down into her uplifted eyes for a moment, while something unspoken deepened and darkened in his own, then began in a different tone and in an impetuous way which quite transformed him on the instant: "Because there is no question in the world that you are the——" Then he stopped abruptly, glanced over his shoulder, and murmured under his breath:

"I thought I recognized the excited tread of an orphan. He's been following us from the corner. I leave you here—he will then eagerly join you. Be tender of him, Bobby—he's very young. And so are you"

Roberta looked after him thoughtfully as his broad shoulders plunged up a stairway. "Now, I wonder if he really was going up there?" she said to herself. She glanced up at the list of offices by the door. "Oh, the White, Denning & White office is there. Perhaps he was."

The next instant the orphan had overtaken her, and she was smiling at him in the innocently surprised way young persons have when they have been confidently expecting an event.

"Oh, so awfully glad to meet you, Miss Roberta," stammered the orphan, joyously "I was afraid Wendell was going all the way with you, you know.

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I am in such deadly fear of him I shouldn't have dared make a third."

"Afraid of Mr. Wendell?" Roberta asked, with lifted eyebrows. "Please explain why."

"Oh, he has such a confounded, cynical, elder-brotherly attitude toward you, you know — sort of a big watch-dog, you know."

"No, I don't know," returned Roberta, thoughtfully. "I'm glad if he has. I need a watch-dog."

"You do?"

"Yes," said Roberta, glancing up at young Cheney's blushing cheeks. "People who are afraid of other people wouldn't be any protection at all in an emergency."

"Oh, Miss Roberta," cried the orphan, piteously, "you're always so hard on a fellow! What have I done to — to — deserve a hit like that? Why, I — why, you know, Miss Roberta — there's nothing in the world I wouldn't do for ——"

"Mr. Cheney," said Roberta, stopping short and looking at him, great dismay in every line of her artless countenance, "I'm awfully, awfully sorry — but do you know I've certainly left a parcel back there at Crowninshields? It's of great importance — would you mind just going back to that drug-store and telephoning for me? I really mustn't stop — I've an engagement for luncheon. Tell them it's a small flat box done up in white tissue — from the jeweler's. Oh, thank you so much. I knew you would — you're always so kind ——"

It was a smile to remember, the one she bestowed on him as, gasping slightly, but with uplifted hat and a devoted look, he left her. Though after he got fully away he reflected that the smile was just a little bit nearer a full laugh than he could have wished. It was so difficult always to know what Miss Roberta meant.

"I don't understand you, Nicholas Wendell," declared Roberta, with indignation. "And I say again, I'm not responsible for such things. I don't do a thing — not one thing — to make them act so."

Having made this final statement she leaned back in the big Cantonese veranda chair, her delicate white skirts sweeping softly about her in the warm July moonlight. The two were alone on this side of the great white-columned portico. It was a favorite spot, for this angle caught the breeze from the river if so much as a breath was stirring. There was not even that to-night. Nicholas had more than once pulled out his handkerchief to draw it across his forehead as he leaned against the pillar. He sat on the step below Roberta, clad in the thinnest of summer garb. There was seldom an evening now that he did not come through the hedge and across the lawn. Sometimes he had a game in the tennis court with Ned and Leslie, and sometimes everybody went out on the river; but often, as to-night, he and Roberta sat quietly in the river corner of the portico and talked idly.

"Not one thing," repeated Roberta, incisively, after a moment's silence, during which she had waited impatiently for Nicholas to answer. For what is the use of an argument like this one if it is to be allowed to drop by the person who has made the accusation?

"You think you don't," said Nicholas, accepting this evident challenge to further combat. "I'll admit, for the sake of doing you all possible justice, that you think you don't. I've watched you through affair after affair, and I've come to believe that you don't quite mean to do all the mischief you really do. But the point is that you do it just the same. You *do* it, Bobby — you can't get around that."

"I should say that not meaning to do it was quite enough," said Roberta, with decision.

"Not in a court of law. It's manslaughter, the best face you can put on it."

"Nonsense!" said Roberta, and pushed her chair three inches farther back from the steps.

"Whew — it's a hot night," observed Nicholas. He ran his hand through a mass of thick brown locks, pushing them back from a broad brow which gleamed white in the moonlight. By day his face was of warm, tanned tints, but now somewhat finely chiseled features stood out in shades of ivory, which Roberta noted with some inward admiration. Presently she rose from her chair and came to sit upon the topmost step, where she could observe her accuser more closely. In carrying on a difficult argument it is always well to be eye-to-eye with one's opponent.

"Just what do I do?" she asked, look-

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ing at him with a face full of perplexity. "Please tell me. Describe it. If you know so well what it is, make me understand it, so that I may avoid it."

"Avoid it!" repeated Nicholas, laughing back at her. "You avoid it! Oh, Bobby, you make me laugh. You do, indeed."

Roberta arose quickly. Nicholas caught at her hand.

"Sit down," he begged, with instant gravity. "I won't laugh about what is really no laughing matter. Only—I seemed to hear an electric dynamo asking for a theory of electricity, so that it might avoid being dangerous to touch."

"You're a silly fellow," said Roberta, distinctly. But she sat down. It was cooler on the step than in the cushioned Cantonese chair.

"It's a little difficult for me to tell you exactly," began Nicholas, his eyes on the river lying darkly below the willows, "because the points of a woman's attraction—her fascination—are too subtle to be described. But I'll try to tell you. First, though—" he paused, hesitated, smiling to himself; then held out one well-knit hand. "This, Roberta," said he, "is a little article, framed in silver, such as lies on your dressing-table. It is capable of faithfully reflecting whatever it is confronted with. Look into it carefully, critically, and learn what is the foundation for my charge."

Slowly he brought the hand to face the girl's face flatly, as one holds a mirror for a friend.

"Oh, no!" cried the girl, impatiently. "Never mind that—leave it out."

"I can't leave it out," Nicholas returned, with the air of an unbiased lawyer considering the points of a case which has been put into his hands. "It's there—a potent element in the prosecution."

"I can't help it that I'm not cross-eyed." Roberta defied him. "And I'm not responsible for a healthy complexion. There's nothing unique in those things. All girls have them."

"Pardon me," observed Nicholas, examining attentively in the moonlight the hand which had played the part of mirror, as if it still retained the image it had been supposed to reflect. Then he sighed deeply, thrust his hands far down into his pockets and shook his head. "Pardon me," said he, "but all girls do not have them. They have eyes and noses and cheeks and hair, but your particular combination—" he spoke slowly and judicially—"is not easily paralleled. Still—to please you—for I know how women despise indiscriminating flattery, and I would avoid all semblance of it—I will admit that beauty is not the largest item in the bill of fascination. You might possess it and still fail to attract permanently. It's this other thing I find fault with."

"Well, then, hurry up and define it, and let's have it over. Anybody would know at first sight that you were a young lawyer, you take so many words and say everything so elaborately, and when you are all through you haven't said anything."

Nicholas's hearty laugh rang out. He pulled his hands out of his pockets and smote them lightly together. "First telling blow for the defence!" he cried, softly.

"Define your accusation," retorted Roberta, shortly.

"I can't define it, but I can tell you what you do. Now, for instance, take young Elliot—I admit youngsters of his age are your easiest game——"

"*Game!*"

"Well—forgive the unfortunate word—they most easily fall victims to your unintentional attraction. Wait, just hear me out. Now, you haven't known young Elliot a week, and have no special reason to be interested in his fortunes. But last evening he came in and rushed to tell you first of all that he had secured a position on the *Sentinel*—a fairly good one for a boy just out of college, to be sure, but nothing at all remarkable. Now, then, what did you do?"

"Well, what did I do?" cried the girl. "Congratulated him, just as anybody would, and in the most commonplace way——"

"My dear, impetuous young friend," said Nicholas, most gravely regarding her as she bent towards him, "pardon me once more. You did congratulate him as anybody would—as in fact we all did—but you did not do it in the most commonplace way. Yes, I know—all you said was—'Oh, Mr. Elliot, really? Isn't that fine? I'm so glad!'—and gave him your hand, as anybody would. But the delighted, sympathetic, soulful expression in those eyes of yours—well—Elliot simply gazed back at you as if you had told him

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"'Don't you know, Bobby, that a man couldn't be a friend of yours forever and not want—infinitely more?'"

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you loved him. It was all up with him from that moment — any idiot could see it."

"It's very evident one did," Roberta retorted, with fire in the glance she gave him. "What would you have had me do? Gaze fixedly at his collar and mumble the words without a particle of expression?"

"It would have been safer, and far less liable to be misunderstood. Elliot is now yours for life. He's a new orphan, and I prophesy he will be a troublesome one. You see, he flatters himself that you care."

"Well, I do care," said Roberta, defiantly.

"Oh, you do! Excuse me, then there is nothing more to be said."

"I care about all of my friends. It would be very selfish not to. I care what happens to you ——"

"Thank you — thank you very much. I appreciate that. You care what happens to Elliot, a week-old acquaintance, and you care what happens to me. We are in the same class ——"

"You will be soon," murmured Roberta, wickedly. Nicholas stood up.

"It's a hot night," he said, with great calm of manner. "Much too hot to sit indoors by a light studying up a little matter of dispute over a land-claim, but I think I must go and do it."

He picked up his straw hat from the veranda floor and stood before her — a tall, straight figure — in the midsummer moonlight. After a moment he went slowly down to the bottom step, turned, and presumably would have said "Good-night" had not the girl upon the top step asked in a surprised way, "Oh, are you going?"

"I think so." It was said most pleasantly.

"Nick ——"

"Yes —" for she hesitated.

"Please — don't go."

"I won't," he answered, promptly. He came back up the steps with one leap, flung his hat away, and sat down, smiling. Roberta retreated to the Cantonese chair. Nicholas swung about, and reaching up his hand, said in a tone which differed a little from the one he had used so far this evening:

"Shake hands, Bobby. I can't quarrel with you. When you condescend to say 'Please don't go' — in that tone — I feel that I'm in danger of becoming an orphan myself."

She shook her head. "You? Never."

"There's no telling. You don't often waste that tone on me. You keep your sisterly expression for me. I can withstand that. But if you were to try any of your pretty little tricks ——"

She leaned forward, smiling; bent low, and looked into his face. The spirit of mischief was in her eyes as they met his, and so she let them rest lingeringly there. Still smiling, she leaned nearer and nearer. His eyes steadily returned her gaze, but his lips were grave. This lasted until her breathing quickened perceptibly, and she drew suddenly back, to say with a little laugh — "There — I knew it. You see you are fire-proof."

"Am I?" he answered, so low that she barely caught the words. Then he looked off into the deep shadows by the river, drawing a long breath. "Yes — I stood that — because I knew you didn't mean it. You tempted me mightily to kiss you then — and you would have had only yourself to blame if I had. But — if I ever kiss the girl I love it won't be because she dares me to do it, and because I can't refuse the dare."

"Did you think that was what I meant?" Roberta seemed angry in earnest now. She sprang up. He was on his feet also on the instant.

"Don't misunderstand me," he said, rapidly. "I understood you. You were only taking me at my word and trying one of the 'pretty little tricks.' You didn't expect me to take advantage of it — you trusted me not to. What I meant was — that if ever I kiss the girl I love it will be because neither she nor I can wait another moment for that kiss."

She did not see the color come into his face with these words, for moonlight does not reveal color. And, besides, her head was turned away. Something in his voice — the same strange thing that had been in it for a moment in the morning just before he left her — gave her a startled thrill. She did not find it easy to reply. And Nicholas stood beside her in silence — as if he had said a thing that a girl could answer.

"I suppose," said Roberta, presently, with an effort at her usual manner, "you think that I try these — what you call 'little tricks' — on other people?"

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"Heaven forbid!"

She looked up quickly, and met eyes of fire.

"If I thought you did—like the one you showed me just now——"

"Of course I don't!" Her head went up proudly. But her hands were all at once cold and shaking, on this hot summer night. He caught them both in his and held them fast.

"I have played this part of good friend and brother till it is played out," he said, with a restrained vehemence which she felt in every nerve. "This old joke about the orphans—it cuts me so now I can't bear it. Never a fellow of them all comes near you that I don't long to take him by the throat and shout 'Hands off!' When that chump Cheney went off with you this morning I could have shot him in the back. Nice spirit for a brother!—I can't complain of a look or a word you give them. All this we've talked of to-night was just a balm to soothe my ache. I know they adore you simply because no sane man can help it—not because you coax them into it. I could look on and see it all if I just knew it was different with me. I mean—that if—whatever of sweetness and light you gave them—your dearer sweetness—your own self—belonged to me——"

He broke off, bending to look searchingly into her downbent face. It was turned away as far as it could be turned with her hands in bondage.

"You've a tender heart, I know," he went on, more slowly. "You hate to hurt me. But you are not prepared for this sudden change from a friend into a lover. We've both said scores of times that a tried old friendship like ours was better than any other relationship. I suppose you think so still. Don't you know—don't you know, Bobby, that a man couldn't be a friend of yours forever and not want—infinitely more? I've been wanting more so long I've forgotten how the old, easy friendship seemed. I've kept up the game—because I was afraid I'd lose you altogether if I showed the change in me. But when you told me this morning that you might go into camp with the Lansings—and where Earle Brentwell—oh, I'm jealous—jealous as a school-boy lover——"

He stopped, with a short, half-articulate sound, as of one who is reaching the place where he cannot choose his words. Roberta did not move. Suddenly he let her hands drop, and placing his own gently on either side of her head, turned it, resisting, where the moonlight could tell him what her lips did not. Then, as the heavy black lashes still held eyes which would not look up, he drew one deep breath, and turned away.

"Forgive me—" he whispered, hoarsely. "But don't offer me the friendship again. If I can't have all, I'll have nothing. I can't endure to be near you another day on the old grounds. . . . Just let me tell you once—because I won't have another chance—that—love me or not—you're just the sweetest, sweetest creature on God's earth—and I'm glad I love you like this, whatever it costs. . . . It—you—Good-night—Bobby——"

He turned and ran down the steps. He paused for one brief glance back over his shoulder at the still white figure above him, when it moved, came swiftly to the end of the veranda, and bent toward him.

"Nick," said a young voice in the clearest soft tones imaginable, "did I say anything that made you think I wanted you to go?"

For the second time that night he came back up the steps at a leap. "Don't you want me to?" he asked, breathlessly. "Do you understand that I'm not willing to stay on any of the old conditions?"

"For the most brilliant young attorney in the county," murmured the girl, "it seems to me that Nicholas Wendell is extraordinarily dull. I never supposed before that good lawyers gave up a case just as it was—almost—won."

"Oh, you consummate little—darling!" breathed Nicholas, with his head bent over hers. "You see—the argument for the defence was so strong—I wanted it to be strong. . . . Bobby—do you remember how I said it must be if I ever kissed the girl I love? . . . Ah—Bobby—do you mean it, dear? . . . You never put your face up like that for anybody else—no—I know you never did. It's just for me—for me!"

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TWO POEMS

BY FLORENCE WILKINSON

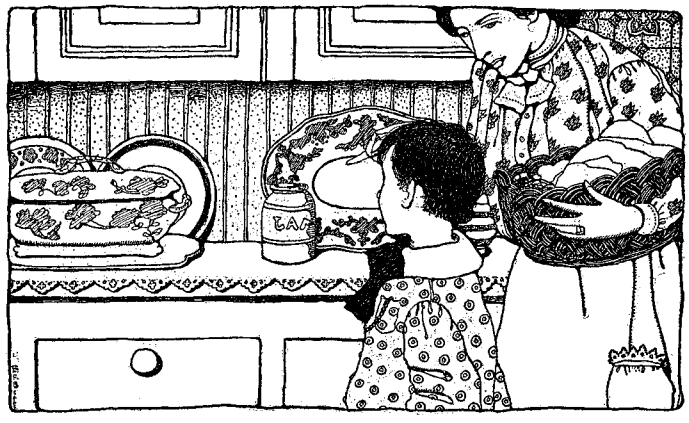
DECORATIONS BY ETHEL FRANKLIN BETTS

BEYOND

I'D *like so much to get Beyond,*
But I am always Here;
I climbed up on the highest hill;
Oh, my legs ached, but farther still
I saw Beyond.

It's Over There, just one step past
Where the blue sky comes down.
I think if some one only would
Go first and hold it tight, I could
Get There at last.

Or else to take it by surprise
When things are still and gray:
Slip softly to that sunset ledge,
Then see off from the very Edge
With my own eyes.



THINGS

GROWN *people do not seem to know*
Things happen of themselves;
That books walk off just when you want them,
And jars fall down from shelves.

"How did my damson jam get here?
I put it on the topmost shelf."
It's very simple to understand,
It climbed down by itself.

I cannot keep things in their place,
However hard I try.
They hide themselves or break themselves,
To unknown corners betake themselves.
Of course you never see them do it,
For things are very sly.

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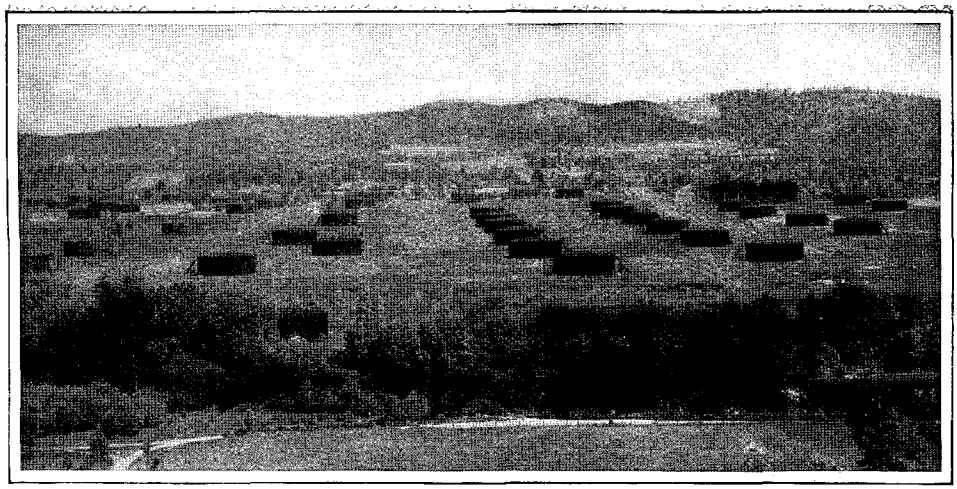

A CITY OF 35,000-BARREL TANKS, OWNED BY THE STANDARD OIL COMPANY AT OLEAN, N. Y.

THE HISTORY OF THE STANDARD OIL COMPANY

BY

IDA M. TARBELL

AUTHOR OF "THE LIFE OF LINCOLN"

ILLUSTRATED BY GEORGE VARIAN AND WITH PHOTOGRAPHS

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Crisis of 1878

"THE Lord of the Oil Regions" was certainly no inapt title for Mr. John D. Rockefeller at the end of the year 1877 when he completed the union of all the pipe lines of Pennsylvania into one company — the United Pipe Lines — for he was now practically the only gatherer, the only storer, and the only refiner of oil. How would he use his power? Would he permit the independent refining interests — a scant ten per cent. of the whole — to live? What would he do with the "poor producer"? Care for his product — give him what he claimed was his proportion of the profits of the business? What kind of an autocrat would Mr. Rockefeller show himself?

Serious Situation in the Oil Fields

The answer came sooner than was anticipated. It was hurried on by an unforeseen and difficult situation — a great outpouring of oil in a new field — the Bradford or Northern Field in McKean County, Pennsylvania. About the time that Mr. Rockefeller's lordship was realized it became certain that a deposit of oil had been discovered which was going to lead soon to a production vastly in excess of the consumption, as well as in excess of the then existing facilities for gathering and storing oil. If Mr. Rockefeller wished to keep his monopoly he must, it was evident, enter upon a campaign of expansion calling for an immense expenditure of energy and money. He must lay pipes in a hundred directions to get the output of new wells; he must build tanks holding thousands of barrels to receive the oil. And all of this must be done quickly if rivals were to be kept out of the way.

There was no hesitation on the part of the United Pipe Lines. One of the greatest construction feats the country has ever

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seen was put through in the years 1878, '79, and '80 in the Bradford oil field by the Standard interests. It was a wonderful illustration of the surpassing intelligence, energy, and courage with which the Standard Oil Company attacks its problems. But while it was putting through this feat, which the writer hopes to take up more in detail in another article, it instituted a policy towards the producers which was regarded by them as tyrannical and unjustifiable.

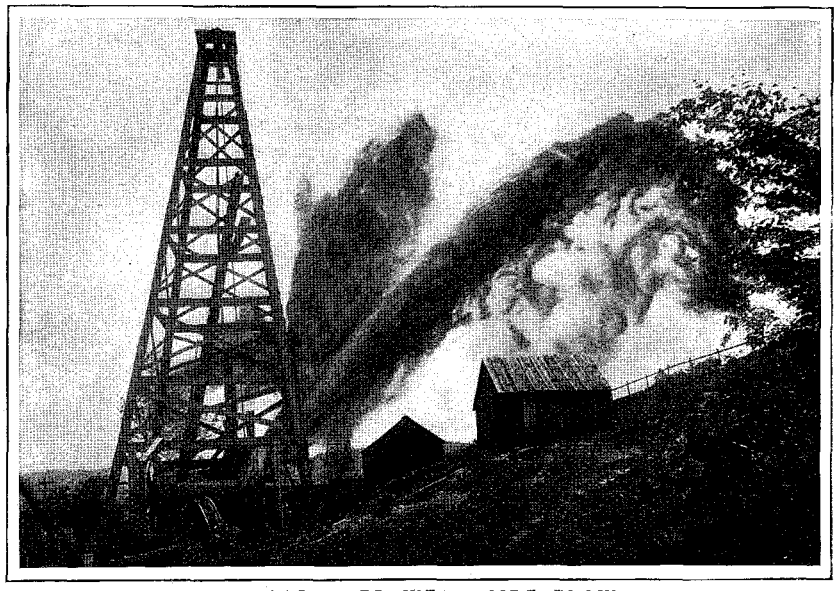
Standard Takes Immediate Advantage

The first manœuvre in this new policy hit the producer in a very tender spot, for it concerned the price he was to receive for oil. The method which prevailed at the time in handling and buying and selling oil was this:

At the request of the well owner connected with a pipe line his oil was run and credited to him in the pipe line office. Here he could hold it as long as he wished by paying a storage charge. If he wished to sell his "credit balance," as oil to his account was called, he simply gave the buyer an order on the line for the oil, and it was transferred to the account of the new buyer. The pipe lines frequently had hundreds of thousands of barrels of oil in hand, and they traded with this oil as banks do with their deposits — that is, they issued certificates for each 1,000 barrels of oil on hand, and these certificates were negotiable like any other paper. Now the United Pipe Lines acknowledged itself a common carrier, and so was obliged to discharge the duty of collecting oil on demand, or at least within a reasonable time after the demand of its clients.

Famous "Immediate Shipment" Order

But in December, 1877, after the monopoly was completed, they refused to discharge their obligations in the customary way. On the plea that they had not sufficient tankage to carry oil in the Bradford field, they issued an order that no oil would be run in that district for any one unless it was sold for "immediate shipment" — that is, no oil would be taken to hold for storage; it would be taken for shipping only. At the same time the Standard buyer, J. A. Bostwick, decreed that henceforth no Bradford oil would be bought for immediate shipment unless it was offered at *less* than the market price. No fixed discount was set. The seller was asked what he would take; his offer was, of course, according to his necessities. Even then an answer was not always immediately given. The seller was told to come back in five or ten days and he would be told if his oil would be taken. A feature of the new order, particularly galling to the oil men, was the man-



A TORPEDOED WELL—SIDE FLOW

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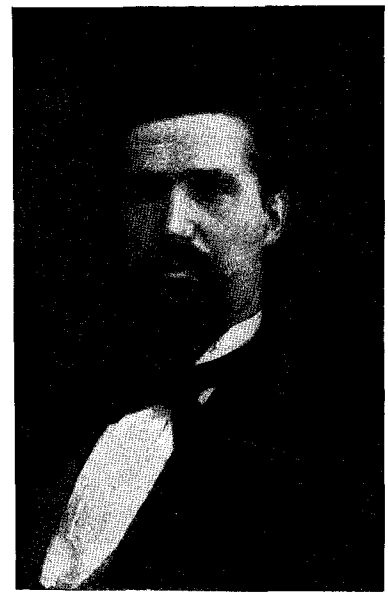
ner in which it was enforced. Formerly the buyer and seller had met freely in the oil exchanges and their business offices, and transactions had been carried on as among equals. Now the producers were obliged to form in line before the United Pipe Lines' offices, and to enter one at a time to consult the buyer. A line of a hundred men or more often stood during the hours set before the office, waiting their turn to dispose of their oil.

It should be said in justice to Mr. Bostwick that he was not the first buyer to take oil at a discount. The producers themselves frequently offered oil at less than the market price when in need of money, but Mr. Bostwick was the first buyer in a situation to force them to make this discount regularly.

When these orders came few of the producers had sufficient private tankage to take care of any amount of oil. Here was the situation then: to keep oil from running on the ground the producer must sell it; but if he sold it he must take a price from two to twenty-five cents or more below the market.

The immediate shipment order was not an invention of the United Pipe Lines. It had been enforced more than once for brief periods by various lines when they found their capacity overcrowded by some unexpected situation. In 1872 the epizoötic among the horses so upset things in the Oil Regions that for a short time an immediate shipment order was enforced. In 1874, when the pipe lines were overtaxed by a great outpouring of oil in the Lower Field, immediate shipment had been attempted, but at that time there were still so many independent pipes struggling for business that the movement met no success. Now, however, the United Pipe Lines had things their own way. That they were not ready to meet the growing Bradford production is plain from a study of the figures. There were in the Oil Regions at the close of 1877, according to the Oil City *Derrick*, 4,000,000 barrels of tankage. There was on hand at this time 3,127,837 barrels of oil, but the empty tankage was in the wrong place. In the Bradford field, where the daily production had suddenly increased from 2,000 barrels in January to 8,451 barrels in December, there was only a little over 200,000 barrels of tankage.* In order to take care of the oil the pipe lines began to make nearly all their shipments from that field, and oil piled up in the Lower Region to the great dissatisfaction of the producers there.

As soon as the situation of the Bradford field was realized both the United pipes and the producers began a furious campaign of tank building. By the beginning of April, 1878, the tankage there had been increased to 1,152,028 barrels. (*Derrick* Hand-Book. Vol. II.) Between April 1 and November 1 seventy tanks of from 10,000 to 25,000 barrels capacity were built in McKean County. The greater number of these belonged to the producers. According to the United Pipe Lines' statement, there was under their control in the entire Oil Regions in October 5,200,000 barrels of tankage, two-thirds of which belonged to producers, but was held by them under a lease.* But



JOHN L. McKINNEY

Among the young men of the country adjacent to the Oil Regions who took early advantage of the discovery of oil was John L. McKinney. In 1862 a well in which he had a third interest, and which he had helped drill, began to flow at the rate of 500 barrels a day. In three years he made a fortune of half a million, and in three years more he had lost it all. He started again, and by 1872 had recovered his position. He has remained one of the leading producers of the Oil Regions. In 1889 Mr. McKinney sold his oil interests to the Standard Oil Company, and has since been one of the Managers of that concern's large oil producing fields.

* Oil City *Derrick*, January 5, 1878.

* The stocks on hand at the end of this month were 4,221,769 barrels. On November 25, 1878, the *Derrick* published tables showing 4,576,500 barrels of tankage up and building in the Bradford field. Connected with the United Lines were 1,774,500 barrels already in use and 1,347,000 building.

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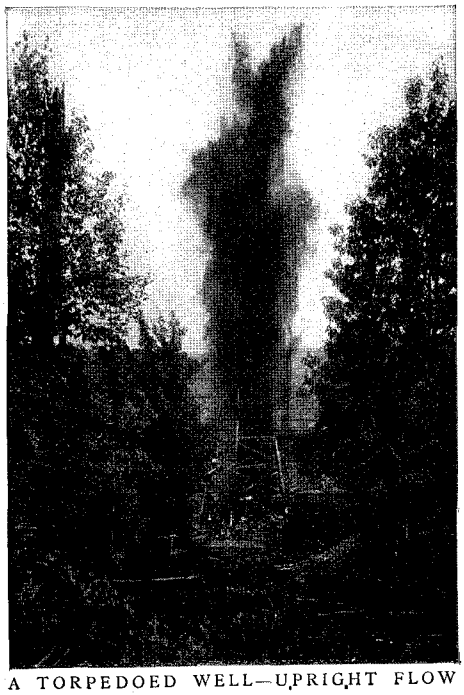
oil poured from the ground faster than tanks could be built. In six months — that is, by July, 1878 — the daily output of Bradford had become over 18,000 barrels, an increase of 10,000 barrels a day over that of the previous December. That it was a most difficult situation for everybody is evident. There was but one way to prevent loss — shut down the wells and stop the drill; but this the producers refused to consider. Of course the price of oil went down rapidly, so far did the production exceed consumption. But why, cried the producer, when oil is already so low, take advantage of our necessity and force us into competition with each other; why enforce this immediate shipment? They answered their question themselves, and began then to make a charge against the Standard, which they continue to make to-day; that is, that they habitually meet the extraordinary expenses to which they are put by depressing the price of crude oil — "taking it out of the producer." The Bradford region demanded great investments, therefore immediate shipment. "The producer pays." The writer has no documentary proof that this is Mr. Rockefeller's policy, but there is no question that the Oil Region believes it is, and this belief must be taken into account if one attempts to explain the long warfare of the oil country on him and his company. It is a common enough thing to-day, indeed, to hear oil producers in northwestern Pennsylvania remark facetiously when a new endowment to Chicago University is reported: "Yes, I contributed so much on such a day. Don't you remember how the market slumped without a cause? The university needed the money, and so Mr. Rockefeller called on us to stand and deliver."



A TORPEDOED WELL—UPRIGHT FLOW

A few months after "immediate shipment" was begun a new cause for dissatisfaction arose. More or less private tankage leased to the lines had always been in existence. It enabled a producer to carry his oil without paying storage, and, of course, it was the business of the company to empty this storage within a reasonable time after the owner demanded it. But in the spring the lines, under the same plea of under capacity, refused to carry out this duty to the tank owner; that is, they refused to give him his tankage, although he had sold his oil. Thus A owns 5,000 barrels of tankage. It is full. He sells a portion of it to Mr. Bostwick, and asks the United Pipe Lines to run the oil accumulated at his wells, But the United Pipe Lines refuses on the ground that the line is full.

The loss to producers incident upon these orders was terrible. All over the Bradford field men saw their oil running on the ground, though they offered to sell it at ruinous prices, and though they might have thousands of barrels of tankage leased to the United Lines. Yet they did not riot; conscious that their own reckless drilling had brought on the trouble, they cursed the Standard, and put down more wells!

No Cars for Independents

But in the spring of 1878 Mr. Rockefeller and his colleagues instituted a series of manœuvres which shattered the last remnant of confidence the oil men had in the sincerity of their claim that they were doing their utmost to relieve the distressed Oil Region, and that their measures were necessary to hold the producers in check. The Pipe Lines began to refuse to load cars for the shippers who supplied the few independent refiners with oil. The experiences of many of these independent oil men have been told before the courts. For instance, Mr. W. H. Nicholson, the representative of Mr. Ohlen, of New York,

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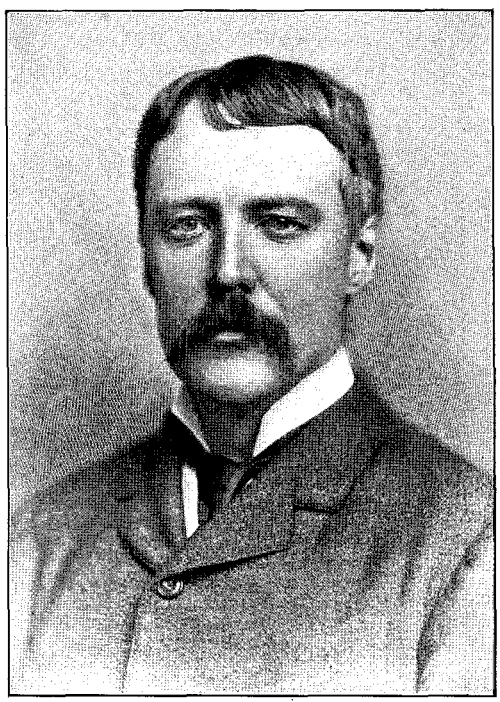
a shipper of petroleum, testified* that in May, 1878, he began to have difficulty in getting cars. At Olean, one day, Mr. Ohlen telegraphed to the officials of the Erie Road to know if he could get 100 cars to run east. The reply came back yes. About noon, Mr. Nicholson says, he saw Mr. O'Day, the manager of the United Pipe Lines in which his oil was stored, and told him that he was waiting to have his cars loaded. Mr. O'Day at once said he could not load the cars. "But I have an order from the Erie officials, giving me the cars," Mr. Nicholson objected. "That makes no difference," Mr. O'Day replied; "I cannot load cars except upon an order from Pratt." Nor would he do it. The cars were not loaded for Mr. Nicholson, although at that time he had ten thousand barrels of oil in the United Pipe Lines, and an order for a hundred cars from the officials of the Erie Road in his hand.



A. J. CASSATT IN 1877

Mr. Cassatt was third vice-president of the Pennsylvania Railroad at the time the suits were brought against that road by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. It was his testimony which showed the real character of the freight contracts the Standard Oil Company had come to enjoy, and it was from his testimony mainly that the reasons for the liquidation of the Empire Transportation Company were learned.

Mr. B. B. Campbell, at that time president of the Producers' Union, gave his experience at this time in the suit of the Commonwealth against the Pennsylvania Railroad.

Rioting Threatened

"I never heard of a scarcity of cars until the early part of June, 1878; I came to Parker about 5 o'clock in the evening, and found the citizens in a state of terrible excitement; the Pipe Lines would not run oil unless it was sold; the only shippers we had in Parker of any amount, viz., the agents of the Standard Oil Company, would not buy oil, stating that they could not get cars; hundreds of wells were stopped to their great injury; thousands more, whose owners were afraid to stop them for fear of damage by salt-water, were pumping the oil on the ground. I used all the influence I had to prevent an outbreak and destruction of railroad and pipe lines; I at once went over to the Allegheny Valley Railroad office and telegraphed to Mr. John Scott, President of the Allegheny Valley Railroad Company.

"'The refusal of the United to run oil unless sold upon immediate shipment, and of the railroad to furnish cars, has created such a degree of excitement here that the more conservative part of the citizens will not be able to control the peace, and I fear that the scenes of last July will be repeated on an aggravated scale.' That message I left in the office about seven o'clock in the evening. I got up the next morning before seven and received an answer.

"'What do you advise should be done? John Scott.' I answered: 'Will meet you to-morrow morning,' which would be Saturday early.

"On Saturday morning I came in on an early train and met at the depot Mr. Shinn, then I believe Vice-President of the Allegheny Valley Railroad Company; David A. Stewart, one of the directors of the road, and Thomas M. King, Assistant Superintendent. I spoke very plainly to Mr. Shinn, telling him that the idea of a scarcity of cars on daily shipments of less than thirty thousand barrels a day was such an

* Investigation ordered by the Secretary of Internal Affairs of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1878.

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absurd, barefaced pretence that he could not expect men of ordinary intelligence to accept it, as the preceding fall when business required the railroads could carry day after day from fifty to sixty thousand barrels of oil. Mr. Shinn stated clearly that I knew that the Allegheny Valley Railroad Company did not control the oil business over its line, but was governed entirely and exclusively by orders received from the Pennsylvania Railroad Company. I then requested him to be the vehicle of communicating to the Pennsylvania Railroad officials my views on the subject, telling him that I was convinced that unless immediate relief was furnished and cars afforded there would be an outbreak in the Oil Regions. After further conversation we parted. My interview with them was not as officials of the Allegheny Valley Railroad Company, but as representatives of the oil traffic carried and controlled by the Pennsylvania Road. On the next Monday I returned to Parker. After passing Redbank, where the Low Grade Road, the connecting link between the Valley Road and the Philadelphia and Erie Road, meets the Valley Road—between that point and Parker the express train was delayed for over half an hour in passing through *hundreds of empty oil cars.*"*

M. N. ALLEN IN 1874

By a mistake, which we regret, the picture of C. M. Allen, formerly of Titusville, Pa., was used in the February instalment of the History of the Standard Oil Company with the title of M. N. Allen.

* Abridged from Mr. Campbell's testimony.

Favorite Project of the Independents

In June another exasperating episode occurred, growing out of an attempt of the oil men to secure an independent route to the seaboard. A route of their own, or at least working in their interest, had always been a favorite device of the oil men when they were squeezed. In the early days the excessive charges and the discriminations of the railroads had exasperated them frequently, until they attempted to secure railroad connections which they could control, and a pipe line bill which would allow them to lay a pipe in any direction where relief was promised; but they had always failed in these undertakings. One of the first movements to meet the South Improvement Company conspiracy was an arrangement to secure a new outlet by the lakes and canal, but the surrender of the conspirators had done away with that necessity. The only practical attempt that was made to meet Mr. Rockefeller's third plan of campaign was the union of independents with the Empire Transportation Company which Col. Potts proposed, and which, as was related in the April number of this magazine, was broken up by the long war which the Standard and the New York roads instituted for that purpose against the Pennsylvania Railroad. The news of the sale of the Empire plant to the Standard Oil Company was no sooner known in the Oil Regions than plans for an outlet to the seaboard which they could control began to be discussed.

Independent Pipe Line to Erie Canal

The first of the projects to be realized was that of the Equitable Petroleum Company, an organization made up of 200 oil producers of the Bradford field. This company, started by Lewis Emery, Jr., had concluded that their only hope lay in reaching the Erie Canal. Finding that certain parties in the Oil Regions had bought a right of way from the Pennsylvania State line to Buffalo, they acquired the title, and with their papers in hand sought an interview with representatives of the Buffalo and McKean Road, and told them if they did not consent that the Equitable lay a pipe line to their road, and did not contract to carry the oil from that connection to Buffalo, the pipe line to Buffalo would be laid.

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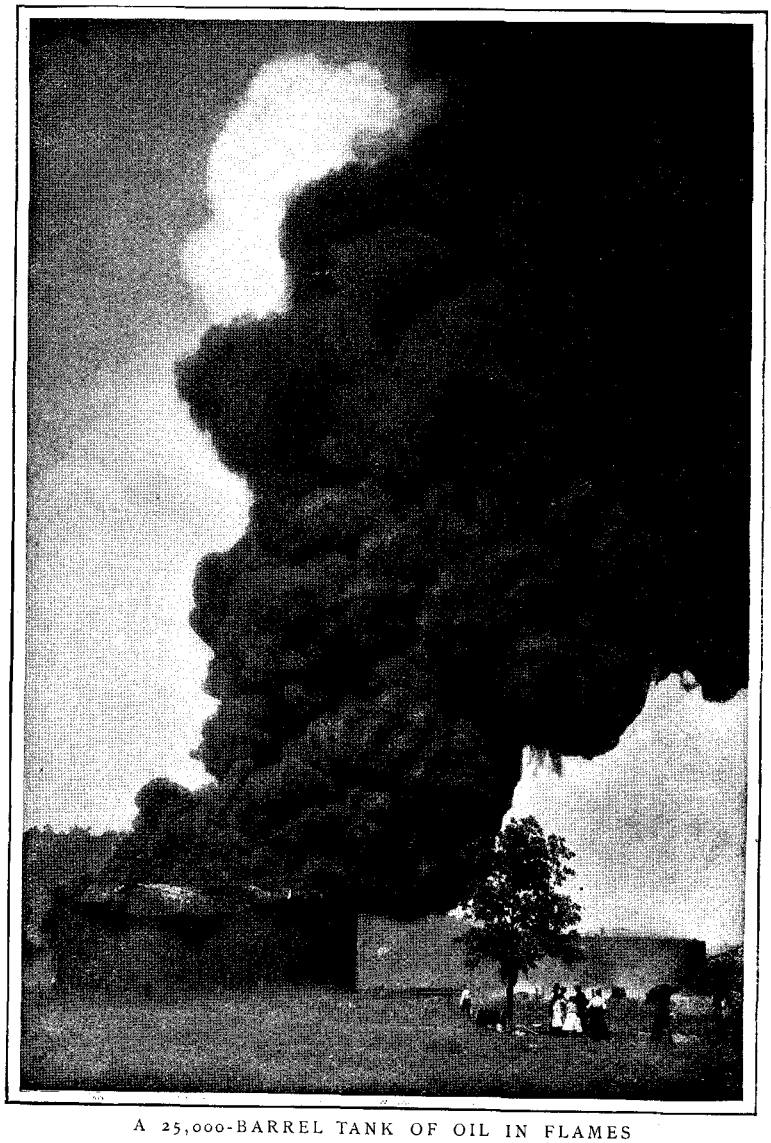
After considerable negotiation a contract was made with the railroad, and by June the new company was ready with pipe line, cars, and barges to carry oil to New York. But no sooner did they attempt to begin operations than the railroad, under pressure



A 25,000-BARREL TANK OF OIL IN FLAMES

from the Pennsylvania Railroad, it was claimed, refused to carry out its contracts. The cars the Equitable ordered sent to the loading track were refused, a side track it had laid was torn up, the frog torn out; everything, indeed, was done to prevent the Equitable doing business, though finally a vigorous appeal to the law brought the road to terms, and in July oil began to flow eastward by this indirect route.

No sooner did the Standard find that the Equitable people were really doing business than they appealed to the railroads. A meeting of the representatives of the trunk lines was held at Saratoga in July, and the rates on crude eastward were dropped to eighty cents to meet the new competition.

First Attempt to Build Seaboard Pipe Line

While this fight was going on against the Equitable all sorts of interference was

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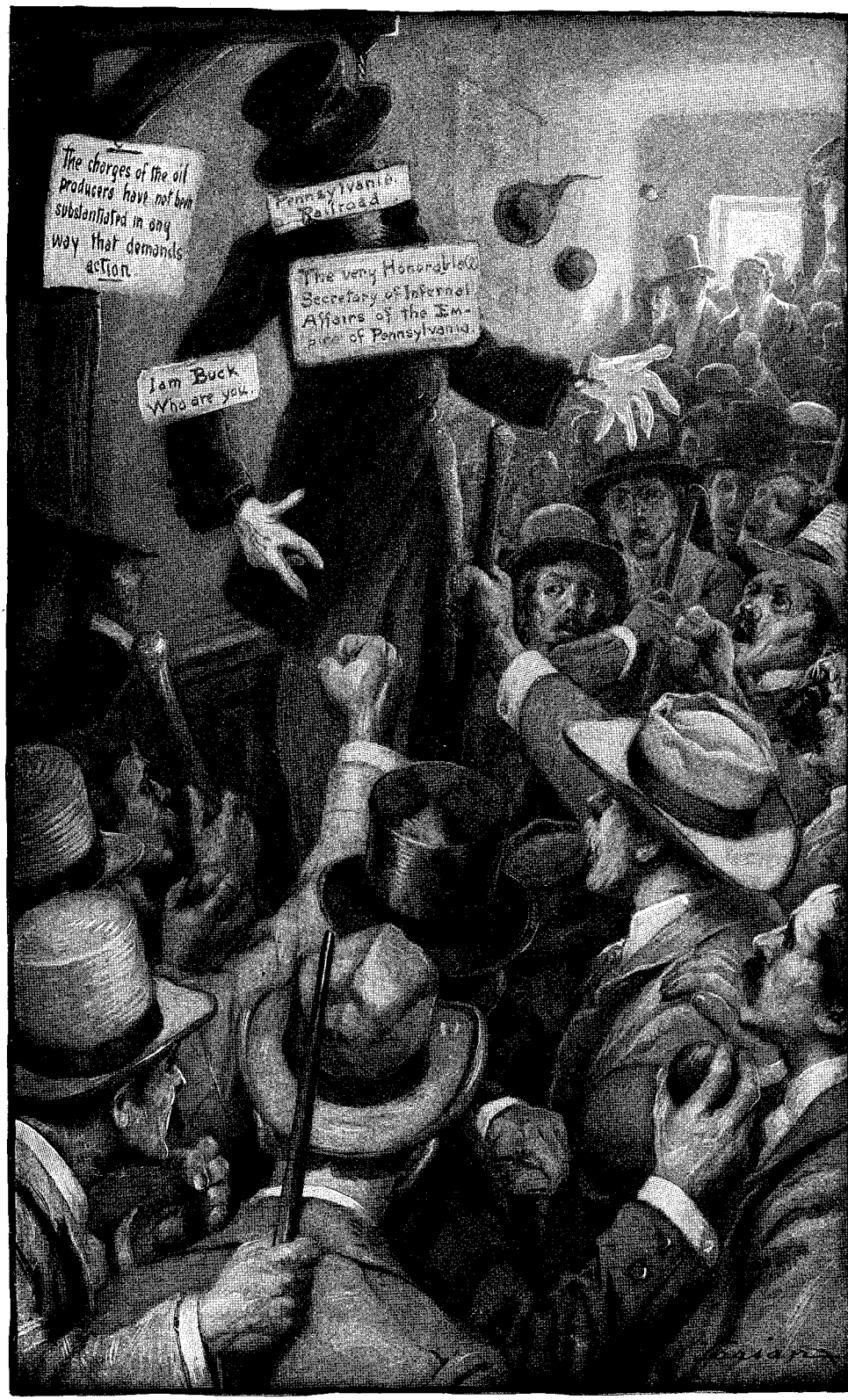
The charges of the oil producers have not been substantiated in any way that demands action.
Pennsylvania Railroad
The very Honorable Secretary of Internal Affairs of the Em- pire of Pennsylvania
I am Buck Who are you.

THE HANGING IN EFFIGY OF "BUCK" McCANDLESS

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falling in the way of a much more ambitious project; nothing less than a plan for a six-inch pipe line from Clarion County, western Pennsylvania, to Baltimore, Maryland, a distance of 235 miles. This project was the revival of a plan for a seaboard pipe line which had made much noise in the country in 1876, but which had finally failed through the bankruptcy of its backers. At that time a route had been surveyed and estimates published by no less an engineer than General Hermann Haupt. The men interested in the present project engaged General Haupt to survey their route. A strong effort was made to pass a free pipe line bill, but this failed, as it always had before, and General Haupt was instructed to purchase a right of way. But from the first the idea met with opposition of the kind most difficult to combat. It was ridiculed as chimerical to attempt to pump oil over the mountains, and General Haupt was declared to be a visionary engineer with a record of failures. The Hoosac Tunnel scandal was dragged out. He had built a bridge which fell down, etc., etc. The farmers were told that the leakage from the pipe line would ruin their fields and endanger their buildings, and an active campaign to excite prejudice was carried on in the farmers' papers. Philadelphia and Pittsburg both fought the plan, the press and the Chambers of Commerce opposing the free pipe bill and the project generally. In Pittsburg the opposition created almost a riot, for the oil producers of the Lower Field, who had long bought their supplies there, now threatened to boycott the city if the pipe line was fought. So strong was the opposition that capital took fright and the company found it most difficult to secure funds. This opposition to the pipe line was, of course, charged against the Standard and the Pennsylvania Railroad.

Now, while the railroads were refusing cars to independent shippers, or if they gave an order for them, the United Pipe Lines were refusing to load them, while the Standard and the railroads were doing the utmost to prevent the Equitable Line doing business, and were discouraging in every way the seaboard pipe line — new routes which would take care of a proportion, at least, of the oil which they claimed they could not handle — thousands of barrels were running on the ground in Bradford, and two of the independent refineries of New York shut down entirely in order that a third of their number might get oil enough to fill an order.*

On the Verge of an Uprising

This interference with the outside interests thus preventing the small degree of relief which they would have afforded, and a growing conviction that the Standard meant to keep up the "immediate shipment" order, at least until it had built the pipes and tanks needed in the Bradford field, finally aroused the region to a point where riot was imminent. The long line of producers who filed into the United Pipe Lines' office day after day to sell their oil at whatever prices they could get for it, and who, having put in an offer which varied according to their necessities, were usually told to come back in ten days, and the buyer would see whether he wanted it or not — this long line of men began to talk of revolution. Crowds gathered about the offices of the Standard threatening and jeering. Mysterious things, cross bones and death heads were found plentifully sprinkled on the buildings owned by the Standard interests. More than once the slumber of the oil towns was disturbed by marching bodies of men. It was certain that a species of Ku-Klux had hold of the Bradford region, and that a very little spark was needed to touch off the United Pipe Lines. In the mean time things were scarcely less exciting in the Lower Fields. The "immediate shipment" order was looked upon there as particularly outrageous, because there was no lack of lines or tanks in that field, and when, in the summer of '78, there was added to this cause an unjustifiable scarcity of cars, excitement rose to fever heat.

"The Spirit of '72"

The only thing which prevented a riot at this time and great destruction of property, if not of life, was the strong hand the Petroleum Producers' Union had on the country. This organization had come into life immediately after the news of the sale of the Empire to the Standard. That news had been really like the sounding of the tocsin in the Oil Regions. It had revived the spirit of '72. But it was the spirit of '72

* See story of R. T. Bush in McCLURE'S MAGAZINE for April, 1903.

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with new dignity and a discretion such as had never been before seen in the blatant regions. In every town from McKean County southwest to Butler the oil towns hastened to organize themselves into a secret society. Little by little it came out that a Producers' Union had been organized. From all that could be learned it looked very much as if the Petroleum Producers' Union had come into existence for business. On November 21, 1877, the first meeting of the new organization was held, "the Petroleum Parliament" or "Congress" it was called. This Congress, which met in Titusville, was composed of 172 delegates. It was claimed that it represented fully two thousand oil producers, and not less than seventy-five millions in money. It is certain it included the representative men of the Oil Regions, those to whose daring, hard work, and energy the discovery and development of the oil fields, as they were known at that time, were entirely due.

For four days the Congress was in session, and it is a remarkable comment on the seriousness with which it had undertaken its work that, although reporters from all parts of the country interested in oil were present, nothing leaked out. In December a second session of four days was held in Titusville, but no announcement of what was doing was made to the press. Indeed, it was only as lines of action developed that the public became familiar with what the producers had resolved on in the days of secret session which they had held. That the Union was behind the seaboard pipe line scheme, and was doing its utmost to help the Equitable Petroleum Company, soon became evident. It was seen, too, that they had begun a serious campaign in the State Legislature in favor of a free pipe line bill and against discrimination in freights by the railroads, and that they were going to carry the fight against discrimination into the Federal Congress. It soon developed that the Union had a strong Committee on Legal Remedies, which was bent on seeing what existing laws could do to overcome the wrongs the oil men were suffering.

Appeal to the Governor of Pennsylvania

It was the Producers' Union which came to the front in July to prevent an outburst. Fearing that if violence did occur their cause would be much injured in the courts, they sent a committee of twenty-five men to Harrisburg to see Governor Hartranft. They laid before him and the Attorney-General of the State the grievance of the oil producers, demanding that the United Pipe Lines be made to perform its duty as a public carrier, and the railroads be made to cease their discrimination against shippers both in the matter of rebates and in furnishing cars. They called the Governor's attention to the fact that there were already existing laws touching these matters which, in their judgment, met the case, and if the existing laws did not give them relief, that it was the plain duty of the Executive to call a meeting of the Legislature and pass such acts as would do so. Governor Hartranft was much stirred by the story of the producers. He went himself to the Oil Regions to see the situation, and in August directed the producers to put their demand into the form of an appeal. This was done, and it was decided to bring proceedings by writ of *quo warranto* against the United Pipe Lines, and by separate bills in equity against the Pennsylvania Railroad and the other lines doing business in the State. It was September before the State authorities began their investigation of the United Pipe Lines, the hearings being held in Titusville. Many witnesses summoned failed to appear, but enough testimony was brought out in this investigation to show that the railroads had refused to furnish cars for independents when they had them empty, and that the United Pipe Lines had clearly violated its duty as a common carrier. In his report on this investigation the Secretary of Internal Affairs, William McCandless, rendered a verdict that the charges of the oil producers had not been substantiated in any way that demanded action.

"Buck" McCandless's Report

The indignation which followed this report was intense. It found a vent in the hanging in effigy of McCandless, who was universally known in the State as "Buck." In the Oil Exchange at Parker, on the morning of October 19, the figure of a man was found hanged by the neck to a gallows, and the producers left it hanging there all day, so that they might jeer and curse it. Across the forehead of the effigy

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in large blood-red letters were the words:

> PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD

Pinned to the gallows there was a card bearing a quotation from Secretary McCandless's report:

> The charges of the oil producers have not been substantiated in any way that demands action.

In Bradford a huge effigy hung in the streets all day, and in the village of Tarport, near by, another swayed on the gallows. They pulled down the effigy at Bradford, and drew from a pocket what purported to be a check signed by John D. Rockefeller, President of the Standard Oil Company, in favor of "Buck" McCandless, for $20,000, and endorsed by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company. That represented the price, they said, that McCandless got for signing the report. Throughout the oil country there was hardly an oil producer to be found not associated with the Standard Oil Company who did not believe that McCandless had sold himself and his office to the Standard Oil combination for $20,000, and used the money to help on his Congressional canvass.

The excitement in the Oil Regions spread all over the country. Something of the importance the press attached to it may be judged from the way the New York *Sun* handled the question. For six weeks it kept one of the ablest members of its staff in the Oil Regions. Six columns of the first page of the issue for November 13 was taken up with the story of the excitement, coupled with the full account of the South Improvement Company, and the development of the Standard Oil Company out of that concern. On November 23 the first page contained four columns more under blazing headings.

The First Suits Brought

Early in 1879 the hearing in the suits in equity brought by the Commonwealth against the various transportation companies of which the producers had been complaining were begun. The witnesses subpœnaed failed at first to appear, and when on the stand they frequently refused to reply; but it soon became apparent to them that the State authorities were in earnest, and that they must "answer or go to Europe." By March, 1879, an important array of testimony had been brought out. Among the Standard men who had appeared had been Mr. John D. Archbold, William Frew, Charles Lockhart and J. J. Vandergrift. A score or more of producers also appeared. The most important witness from the railroad circles, and, indeed, the most important witness who appeared was Mr. A. J. Cassatt. Mr. Cassatt's testimony was startling in its candor and its completeness, and substantiated in every particular what the oil men had been claiming: that the Pennsylvania Railroad had become the creature of the Standard Oil Company; that it was not only giving that company rates much lower than to any other organization, but it was using its facilities with a direct view of preventing any outside refiner or dealer in oil from carrying on an independent business.*

New York Begins Investigation

The same conditions which led to these suits led to investigations in other States. Towards the end of 1878 the Chamber of Commerce of New York City demanded from the Legislature of the State an investigation of the New York railroads. This investigation was carried on from the beginning of 1879. The revelations were amazing. Before the Hepburn Commission, as it was called from the name of the chairman, was through with its work there had appeared before it to give testimony in regard to the conduct of the Standard Oil Company and of the relation of the Erie and the Central roads to it, H. H. Rogers, J. D. Archbold, Jabez A. Bostwick, and W. T. Sheide. A large number of independent oil men had also appeared. William H. Vanderbilt had been examined, and G. H. Blanchard, the Freight Agent of the Erie Road, had given a full account of the relation of the Erie to the Standard, perhaps the most useful piece of testimony, after that of Mr. Cassatt, which was given.†

Ohio Takes a Hand

At the same time that the Pennsylvania suits were going on, and the Hepburn

* The story of the Empire Transportation Company, told in McClure's for April, was brought out in this testimony of Mr. Cassatt's.

† The testimony taken before the Hepburn Committee has never been printed in the series of Assembly documents. An edition of 100 copies was printed during the session for the use of the committee. It is usually bound in five volumes, and is, of course, very rare.

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Commission was doing its work, the Legislature of Ohio instituted an investigation. It was commonly charged that this investigation was smothered, but it was not smothered until H. M. Flagler had appeared before it and given some most interesting facts concerning rebates. A number of gentlemen who were finding it hard to do business also appeared before the Ohio committee and told their stories.* Certain private lawsuits against the Standard were also in progress at this time. By April, 1879, there had been brought out in these various suits and investigations a mass of testimony sufficient, in the judgment of certain of the producers, to establish the truth of a charge which they had long been making, and that was that the Standard was simply a revival of the South Improvement Company. Now the verdict of the Congressional Committee had been that the South Improvement Company was a conspiracy. Therefore, said the producers, the Standard Oil Company is a conspiracy. Their hope had been, from the first, to obtain proof to establish this charge. Having this they believed they could obtain judgment from the courts against the officials of the company, and either break it up or put its members in the penitentiary. The more hot-headed of the producers believed that they now had this evidence.

Grounds for the Charge of Conspiracy

If one will examine the testimony which had been given thus far in the course of the various examinations one will see that there was reason for their belief. In the first place, it had been established that all the stockholders of the South Improvement Company, excepting four, were now members of the Standard Oil combination. Indeed, the only persons holding high positions in the new combination at this date who were not South Improvement Company men were Charles Pratt, J. J. Vandergrift, H. H. Rogers, and John D. Archbold.

The South Improvement Company had been a secret organization. So was the new Standard alliance; that is, the most strenuous efforts had been made to keep it secret; for instance, the sale of the works of Lockhart, Warden & Pratt to the Standard was kept from the public. Indeed, it was a year after these sales before even the Erie Railroad knew that Mr. Rockefeller had any affiliations besides those with Pratt & Company, and it made its contracts with him on this assumption. When purchases of refineries were made it was the custom to continue the business under the name of the original concern; thus, when Mrs. A., of Cleveland, sold in 1878, as recounted in this magazine for March, the persons selling were obliged to keep the sale secret even from the employees of the concern. "The understanding was with regard to the sale of the property to the Standard Oil Company," said the shipping clerk in his affidavit, "that it should not be known outside of their own parties, that it was to be kept a profound secret, and that the business was to be carried on as if the —— Oil Company was still a competitor."

One of Mr. Rockefeller's Affidavits

To keep the relations of the various Standard concerns secret Mr. Rockefeller went so far, in 1880, as to make an affidavit like the following: "It is not true, as stated by Mr. Teagle in his affidavit, that the Standard Oil Company, directly or indirectly through its officers or agents, owns or controls or has control of the works of Warden, Frew & Co., Lockhart, Frew & Co., J. A. Bostwick & Co., C. Pratt & Co., Acme Refining Company, Imperial Refining Company, Camden Consolidated Company, and the Devoe Manufacturing Company, or any of them; nor is it true that the Standard Oil Company, directly or indirectly through its officers or agents, owns or controls the refinery at Hunter's Point, New York. It is not true that the Standard Oil Company, directly or indirectly through its officers or agents, purchased or acquired the Empire Transportation Company or furnished the money therefor; nor is it true that the Standard Oil Company inaugurated or began or induced any other person or corporation to inaugurate or begin a war upon the Pennsylvania Railroad Company or the Empire Transportation Company, as stated in the affidavit of Mr. Teagle."*

No doubt there is a technical explanation of this affidavit, although abundant testimony is in existence showing that the

* Three hundred copies of the report of the testimony taken were printed. No copy is to be found in any library of the State of Ohio. The writer has never seen but one copy of this report.

* Court of Common Pleas, State of Illinois, Cuyalwga County. Standard Oil Company *vs.* William C. Scofield, *et al*, 1880.

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works of Messrs. Pratt, Lockhart & Warden, at least, had been bought long before this affidavit was made, and paid for in Standard Oil Company stock, and that they were working in alliance with that company. It was shown in the April number of this magazine that on October 17, 1877, the Standard Oil Company paid $2,500,000 in certified checks on the purchasing price of the plant of the Empire Transportation Company.

Standard Officials Reluctant Witnesses

While none of the other members of the Standard Oil Company examined in 1879 were quite so sweeping in their denials, all of them evaded direct answers. The reason they gave for this evasion was that the investigations were an interference with their rights as private citizens, and that the government had no business to inquire into their methods. Consequently, when asked questions, they refused to answer "by advice of counsel." Ultimately the gentlemen did answer a great many questions. But taking the testimony all in all through these years, it certainly is a mild characterization to say that it totally lacks in frankness. The testimony of the Standard officials before the Hepburn Commission was so evasive that the committee in making its report spoke bitterly of the company as "a mysterious organization whose business and transactions are of such a character that its members decline giving a history or description of it lest this testimony be used to convict them of a crime." The producers certainly were right in claiming that secrecy was a characteristic of the Standard as it had been of the South Improvement Company.

The new Standard combination, like the South Improvement Company, aimed at controlling the entire refining interest. "The coal oil business belongs to us," Mr. Rockefeller once told a recalcitrant refiner. His associates were saying the same on all sides; "the object of the Standard Oil Company is to secure the entire refining business of the world," a member of the concern told B. F. Nye, an Ohio producer.* The degree of success they had met in carrying out this ambition has been already shown. In 1879, so Mr. Rogers told the Hepburn Commission, they controlled from 90 to 95 per cent. of the refining interests of the country.

Rebates Again — The Old Story

From the days of the collapse of the South Improvement Company the Standard Oil Company had enjoyed rebates. These special rebates had steadily increased, until in 1877 Mr. Rockefeller had been able to make with all the trunk lines contracts which in every particular paralleled the contracts which in January, 1872, Messrs. Scott, Gould, Vanderbilt, and McClellan made with the South Improvement Company. They now had a rebate on every barrel of oil they shipped, and this was given with the understanding that the railroad should allow no rebate to any other shipper unless that shipper could guarantee and furnish a quantity of oil for shipment which would, after deduction of his commission, realize to the road the same amount of profit realized from the Standard trade.

No clause in the South Improvement Company's contract with railroads had given more offence to the oil world than that which called for a drawback to the company on all the oil shipped by outsiders. It will be remembered that the beneficiaries of this contract were to receive drawbacks of $1.06 a barrel on all crude oil that outside parties shipped from the Oil Regions to New York, and a proportionate drawback on that shipped from other points. The rebate system was considered illegal and unjust, but men were more or less accustomed to it. The drawback on other people's shipment was a new device, and it threw the Oil Region into a frenzy of rage. It did not seem possible that the Standard would attempt to revive this practice again, and yet when it had got its hand strongly on the four trunk lines it made a demand for the drawback. On February 15, 1878, four months after the Pennsylvania succumbed to the Standard's demand, Mr. O'Day wrote to Mr. Cassatt: "I here repeat what I once stated to you, and which I wish you to receive and treat as strictly confidential, that we have been for many months receiving from the New York Central and Erie railroads certain sums of money, in no instance less than twenty cents per barrel on *every barrel of crude oil carried by each of these roads.*" Continuing, Mr. O'Day says: "Co-operating as we are doing with the Standard Oil Company

* Ohio State investigation of freight discrimination, 1879.

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and the trunk lines in every effort to secure for the railroads paying rates of freight on the oil they carry, I am constrained to say to you, that in justice to the interests I represent we should receive from your company at least twenty cents on each barrel of crude oil you transport. . . . . In submitting this proposition I find that I should ask you to let this date from the 1st of November, 1877, but I am willing to accept as a compromise (which is to be regarded as strictly a private one between your company and ours) the payment by you of twenty cents per barrel on all crude oil shipments commencing with February 1, 1878."

Subservience of the Pennsylvania

Mr. Cassatt complied with Mr. O'Day's request. In a letter to the comptroller of the road he said that he had agreed to allow this commission after having seen the receipted bills, showing that the New York Central allowed them a commission of thirty-five cents a barrel, and the Erie Railroad a commission of twenty cents a barrel on Bradford oil and thirty cents on all other oils. Thus the Standard Oil Company, through the American Transfer Company, received, in addition to rebates on its own shipments, from twenty to thirty-five cents drawback a barrel on all crude oil which was sent over the trunk lines by other people as well as by itself. In the suit of the Commonwealth against the Pennsylvania accounts of the road were brought into court for examination. In the course of the examination the following conversation occurred between Mr. Cassatt and the examiner:

"I understand, Mr. Cassatt, that this 22½ cents paid to the American Transfer Company is not restricted to all oil that passed through their lines."

"No, sir; it is paid on all oil received and transported by us, as I before stated."

And the following between an assissant auditor of the road and the examiner:

"Upon this paper appears the name of H. C. Ohlen as a consignee of 29,877 barrels of oil upon which the American Transfer Company was allowed a rebate of twenty cents per barrel. Assuming that Mr. Ohlen is an outside refiner (he was an outside shipper), not connected with the Standard Oil Company, can you explain how the Pennsylvania Railroad Company allowed that rebate to the American Transfer Company?"

"The character of my duties will not permit me to answer that question, as I have not sufficient personal knowledge of it."

Another offensive clause of the 1872 contracts was that pledging the railroads to lower or raise the gross rates of transportation for such times and to such extent as might be necessary to overcome competition. Now the new contracts of the Standard provided the same arrangement; that is, they stipulated that the rates were to be lowered if necessary so as to place the Standard on a parity with shippers by competing lines. The workings of the clause were illustrated when the producers got the Equitable Line through in 1878, the railroads dropping their charge to eighty cents a barrel, and in some cases even less. Later, in June, 1879, when the Tidewater Pipe Line got through to Williamsport, on the Reading Railroad, the United Pipe Lines dropped their charges from thirty to five cents a barrel, and demanded of the railroads that they ship as low as twenty cents, assuring them that in thirty days they would have the Tidewater dried up.

South Improvement Co. Redivivus

Enough has been said to show that the producers had evidence for their claim that the contracts of the South Improvement Company and the Standard Oil Company with the railroads were similar in every particular as far as principles were concerned — that they differed alone in the amounts of the rebates and drawbacks.

The avowed object of the South Improvement Company was to put up the price of refined oil. With the increase of crude oil and the consequent lower prices refined naturally fell. Both combinations were formed to keep the refined article scarce on the market by controlling all the refineries and by refusing to sell under competition. The officials of the South Improvement Company stated under oath that they hoped to raise the price fifty per cent. The Central Organization hoped to put up the price of refined to twenty-five cents. Now, at that time, March, 1875, crude oil was selling at $1.63 a barrel, a price which called for not over sixteen cents a gallon for refined. Already the country had had a spectacular demonstration of what could be done in keeping up the price of refined, for in the winter of '76 and '77 the first fruits of the Standard Oil combination may be said to have been reaped, when for nearly six months refined was kept at or above twenty-six

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cents. According to the estimate of the period, crude oil should sell for $4 when refined was at twenty-six cents. Yet there was not a month of this period when crude averaged $4. In December, when refined averaged 29⅜, crude was down to $3.78⅛.* That is, the Standard had obtained such a control of the market that they sold their product at a price out of all proportion to the price of the raw product. This, of course, had been exactly what the producers had declared the South Improvement Company would do if it got hold of the refining interests as it planned. Even in the case where certain large producers had entered into a partnership with the Standard on condition that they pay them prices for crude commensurate with the price of refined, these producers claimed the agreement had not been kept. One of these cases came to light in a suit instituted in 1878. It seems that some time in December, 1874, the large oil company of H. L. Taylor & Company sold a one-half interest in its property to the Standard Oil Company. The reason for the sale the plaintiffs stated in their complaint to be as follows:

Example of the Standard's Methods

The extent of their (the Standard's) business and control over pipe lines and refineries had enabled them to procure, and they had procured from the railways, more favorable terms for transportation than others could obtain. These advantages and facilities placed it within their power to obtain, and they did obtain, far better and more uniform prices for petroleum than could be obtained by the plaintiffs. The said organization and firms, by virtue of their monopoly of the business of refining and transportation of oil, had been at times almost the only buyers in the market, and at such times had been enabled to dictate and establish a price for crude oil far below its actual value, as determined by prices of refined oil at same dates, and they thus obtained a large share of the profits which should have fallen to the plaintiffs and other purchasers. The sale was made, and in consideration of the foregoing premises, and upon the promise and agreement on the part of the defendants that the partnership thus formed should have the benefit of the advantage and facilities of the said defendants, and the organizations and firms managed and controlled by defendants, in marketing its oil; that the firm should have to the extent of its production the advantage of the sales of refined by the defendants or said Standard Oil Company, either for present or future delivery, so that there should be at no time any margin or difference between the ruling price of refined oil, and the price which defendants would pay the partnership for the crude by it produced, beyond the necessary cost of refining. This thing formed the inducement, and the larger part of the consideration for the sale of said property to defendants. The amount actually received for said interest was far beneath its actual value, and without the agreement on the part of the defendants to pay to the partnership for its product prices at all times commensurate with the prices of refined oil, they would not have sold the said interest nor entered into said partnership.

* * * * *

The defendants, although requested to do so, have not only failed, neglected and refused to comply with this agreement, but have, by false and erroneous statements, misled the plaintiffs, and induced them to consent to the sale to them and to the Standard Oil Company of large quantities of crude petroleum, produced by the partnership at prices far below its actual value, to the great loss and damage of the orators. That on or about December 16, 1876, refined was selling at a price equivalent to about $7 for crude oil, at which time plaintiffs called upon defendants for a compliance with their agreement, and asked that they take or purchase 210,000 barrels of the production of the partnership at a price commensurate with the price of refined at the time. This defendants neglected and refused to do, and the partnership was forced to sell the same at prices varying from three to four dollars, making a loss to the partnership upon this one transaction of from $600,000 to $1,000,000, for which said defendants neglect and refuse to account.

* * * * *

That the said defendants for themselves, and for the said Standard Oil Company and other organizations and firms aforesaid, have since the formation of the partnership received from the railways a rebate for drawback in the shape of wheelage, or otherwise at times as high as one dollar per barrel upon all oil shipped by them to the seaboard. That instead of using these advantages which they possess for the benefit and profit of the partnership, as they covenanted to do, they have used them against its interest by restraining trade, preventing competition, and forcing plaintiffs to accept any price which defendants, the said Standard Oil Company, or the other organizations aforesaid, might offer for their production. That the amount of oil produced and sold by the partnership for the three years beginning with the date of its formation, and ending December 1, 1877, was 2,657,830 barrels. That the profits of defendants upon oil refined by them during said period, taking into consideration the rebates and drawbacks received from the railways, have averaged at least one dollar per barrel over and above the cost of refining, and at times as high as four and five dollars. That these profits, under the partnership agreement that no margin should exist between crude and refined prices, should to the extent of the production of the partnership have been paid by defendants to the partnership. That the amount lost by the partnership and realized by the defendants, by reason of the failure and refusal of said defendants to comply with their agreement, is not less than $2,500,000, for one-half of which defendants should account to your orators, but which they neglect and refuse to do.

* *Derrick* Hand-Book, Vol. 1.

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The Case for Criminal Conspiracy

Naturally enough the producers now pointed out that the case of the H. L. Taylor Company was a demonstration of what they had claimed in 1872, when the South Improvement Company, alarmed at the uprising, offered them a contract, and what they had always claimed since when the Standard offered contracts for oil on a sliding scale, viz., that such contracts were never meant to be kept; that they were a blind to enable the Standard to make scoops such as they had made in the winter of 1876 and 1877.

Taking all these points into consideration:

First: That the Standard Oil Company, like the South Improvement Company, was a secret organization;

Second: That both companies were composed in the main of the same parties;

Third: That it aimed, like its predecessors, at getting entire control of the refining interest;

Fourth: That it used the power the combination gave it to get rebates on its own oil shipments and drawbacks on the shipments of other people;

Fifth: That it arranged contracts which compelled the railroads to run out all competition by lowering their rates;

Sixth: That it aimed to put up the price of refined without allowing the producer a share of the profits;—

Taking all these points into consideration, many of the producers, including the president of the Petroleum Producers' Union, Mr. B. B. Campell, and certain members of his council, came to the conclusion that as they had sufficient evidence against the members of the Standard combination to insure conviction for criminal conspiracy, they should proceed against them. Strenuous opposition to the proceeding as hasty and ill-advised developed in the council and the Legal Committee, but the majority decided that the prosecution should be instituted. Mr. Scott and Mr. Cassatt were omitted from the proposed indictment on the ground that they were already weary of the Standard, and would cease their illegal practices gladly if they could.

The Indictment of Mr. Rockefeller

On the 29th day of April, 1879, the Grand Jury of the County of Clarion found an indictment against John D. Rockefeller, William Rockefeller, Jabez A. Bostwick, Daniel O'Day, William G. Warden, Charles Lockhart, Henry M. Flagler, Jacob J. Vandergrift, and George W. Girty. (Girty was the cashier of the Standard Oil Company.) There were eight counts in the indictment, and charged, in brief, a conspiracy for the purpose of securing a monopoly of the business of buying and selling crude petroleum, and to prevent others than themselves from buying and selling and making a legitimate profit thereby; a combination to oppress and injure those engaged in producing petroleum; a conspiracy to prevent others than themselves from engaging in the business of refining petroleum, and to secure a monopoly of that business for themselves; a combination to injure the carrying trade of the Allegheny Valley and Pennsylvania Railroad companies by preventing them from receiving the natural petroleum traffic; to divert the traffic naturally belonging to the Pennsylvania carriers to those of other States by unlawful means; and to extort from railroad companies unreasonable rebates and commissions, and by fraudulent means and devices to control the market prices of crude and refined petroleum and acquire unlawful gains thereby.

Four of the persons in the indictment —Messrs. O'Day, Warden, Lockhart, and Vandergrift—all citizens of Pennsylvania, gave bail, and, early in June application was made to Governor Hoyt of Pennsylvania to issue a requisition before the Governor of New York for the extradition of the other five gentlemen.

With damaging testimony piling up day by day in three States, and with an indictment for conspiracy hanging over the heads of himself and seven of his important associates, matters looked gloomy for Mr. John D. Rockefeller in the spring of 1879. "The good of the oil business" certainly seemed in danger. But Mr. Rockefeller is not easily shaken. There is no evidence to show that he was perturbed in the least now, but he certainly was thinking hard, and evidence of this thinking was soon to come before the oil men.

(*To be continued.*)

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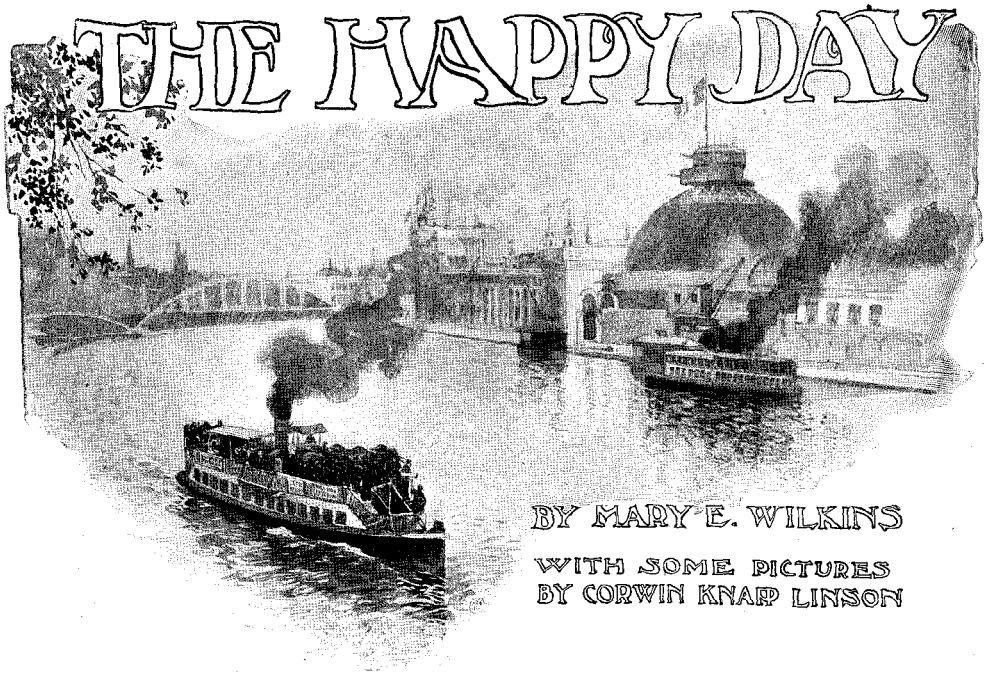
THE HAPPY DAY



BY MARY E. WILKINS

WITH SOME PICTURES BY CORWIN KNAP LINSON

ON Ascension Day, Eli, his wife Josephine, their two children, the boy and girl, and Josephine's mother, made a little excursion to Paris. They were dressed in their holiday clothes, shabby enough to all except the wearers. For them those old, time-worn, weather-beaten garments had a glamour of past as well as present festivity, which caused them to glimmer here and there, as with threads of gold and silver, under the lights of happy memory. A fruit stain on Josephine's frock was associated with a rollicking day in the Bois de Boulogne and a luncheon of new milk and cherries, a paint spot on Eli's coat brought reminiscences of ecstacies of observation in the Jardin des Plantes, and both were to be regarded as decorations of the creation-old order of childish joy of life rather than blemishes.

The humble family had that same simple loyalty toward their poor little possessions which they had toward one another. Josephine smoothed Eli's old coat, and said, lovingly, how fine it looked, as good as new after all these years, and Eli eyed with a sort of veneration the perennial flower in Josephine's hat, while both parents and the grandmother glanced constantly with rapture at the little ones, who were decked out wonderfully in some precious odds and ends. The grandmother, small and old, but alert, like an aged sparrow whose coat might rust, while its wing-power had not begun to run down, looked at everybody and everything; herself, her children, and the day, as with a quick jerk of assenting approbation.

All the country was dim beneath shifting folds of mist when they started that morning on the little river steamer for Paris, but they did not object to that. They seated themselves on the deck aft, in a radiant semicircle of content. Their mouths described upward bows of delight, their eyes were boldly confidential with joy. Their rustic faces, except the grandmother's, which was like an ivory hieroglyphic of past happiness, deepening, as one watched, by that of the present, gleamed as with a pale freshness of flowers, through the mist. They looked at the strangers around them with a sort of challenge, which was at once charming and pathetic. "Look at us!" they seemed to cry, "Look, how happy! Pit your happiness against ours, if you dare!"

Josephine laughed with the abandon of a child when some raindrops blew in her face.

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"So much better than the hot sunshine!" said she.

The grandmother also laughed, though there was a chill in her old bones; she was not able to comprehend it at the same time with her happiness. She extended her black skirt over the blue holiday frock of the little girl, and did not feel the damp wind in her thin knees.

Eli carried a large lunch basket. They were to stay the whole of that blessed Ascension Day, and they were to do a wonderful and unprecedented thing. They would do no less: Eli, Josephine, the grandmother, and the little ones, than to go to the great, the superb Exposition of all the Nations, with the glories of which Paris and all the world rang. They would go as well as the rest. Eli had been saving the money for a long time.

When the little party reached the Porte Monumentale, they all bent their necks backward like geese and stared up at the gaudy blue arch topped with that artless Frivolity of Paris, and they drew long breaths. The grandmother laid a hand on each of the children's heads, and held them forcibly with their round-eyed, innocent faces upturned in the true slant of observation.

"Look, Louis; look, Marie! See what thine eyes have never seen before and will never see again, and remember until the day of thy death, 'tis the Porte Monumentale, 'tis the great entrance to the great Exposition of Paris. Look, look!"

"Yes, look, both of you, and remember," acquiesced Josephine, and Eli turned his eyes from the gate to the upturned faces of his children, and nodded admonishingly and smiled, for he seemed to see in their round eyes the image of the whole reflected to greater glory.

Then Eli approached the office to purchase the admission tickets, with his family pressing close to his heels lest they be separated. How dreadful it would be should that happen, and some other woman pass in on Eli's ticket! Josephine cast a sidewise eye of suspicion at a stout woman in a jetted cape, who was pushing up ponderously in the rear, with a blank face, as averted from any alertness of purpose as a cow's. Then Josephine contracted

"A radiant semicircle of content."

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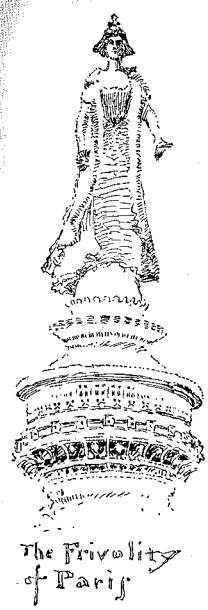
"Stared up at the gaudy blue arch."



her brows fiercely, set her mouth, drove her sharp elbow relentlessly into the soft bulk of the woman, and wedged herself in front of her. The woman expressed her mind with husky volubility. Josephine leaned back imperceptibly against her, and did not turn, but smiled triumphantly against the shoulders of Eli's holiday coat.

When the tickets were bought, Eli strutted into the grounds, Josephine keeping resolutely at his side, with the girl holding to a fold of her skirt, while the grandmother, with the boy in hand, brought up the rear.

Then the glory of the occasion began to wax toward its full. They trudged about from one wonder to another. They halted suddenly, as if at a word of command, before a statue in the avenue; they ranged themselves in an awestruck tableau before a new palace. They entered a grand portal hesitatingly, and passed between the glittering spectacles, huddled together, half with fear, half with ecstacy. They eyed the uniformed attendants with apologetic deference. They were not quite convinced that their admission fees entitled them to so much. They would have melted meekly away

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"Long after-tastes of wonderful flavors."

at a wave of a hand in a gold-laced cuff.

When they reached the Venetian glass exhibit, the grandmother caught her breath and turned quite pale. This poor old daughter of a humble line, confronted by this array of costly and fragile splendor, could at first comprehend only that inseparable minor note of all human achievements: destruction. She had possessed so little that the possibility of loss pushed always between the object and the full grasp of her soul.

She gathered her cloak and her skirts tightly around her with one hand, she held the boy in a firm clutch with the other.

"Do not touch, Louis," she hissed in his ear. "See you not what it says? Do not touch."

Josephine also drew her garments about her, and said to the little girl that she must be careful.

As for Eli, he passed with stiffened body, but his very soul bent low before this dazzle of unwonted preciousness.

While they were before the Venetian glass, an American purchased a superb piece, and the card marked "Vendu" was hung upon it. All the members of the little family turned their open faces like a clump of homely flowers toward the American.

The vase had cost one thousand francs. Who must he be who could pay one thousand francs for a single little vase? Generations of Eli's simple race had never at one time owned as much money as that, and to see it paid for a vase which one could dash to worthless fragments with a blow! They were dazzled, they experienced an exhilaration of spirit as if they had tasted strong wine. Come, this was tasting life to see a man purchase a thousand-franc vase! They looked at one another, they nodded, and laughed. Their eyes flashed. They were happier than the man who had bought

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the vase, they had more for nothing. They had driven the one successful bargain of the poor with the rich in all life.

When the clock struck noon, and it was time for luncheon, the rain was falling in a solid slant.

"It will lay the dust," Josephine said, smiling. "It might have been dusty otherwise."

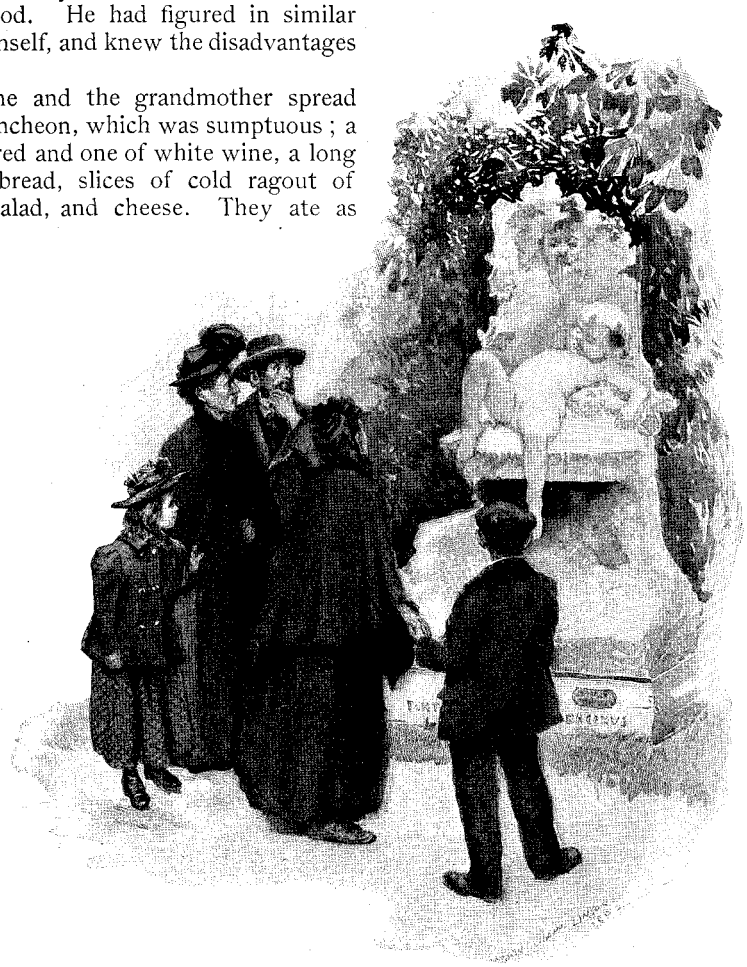
The grandmother nodded. She held a corner of her cloak over the boy's cap. Josephine drew a corner of hers over the girl, who had in her hat an end of blue ribbon forked like a bird's wing, which might spot.

Eli found a beautiful dry place in a corner of an arcade of an unfinished building. No workmen were about on Ascension Day, and they were not disturbed.

Once an attendant passing by looked at them doubtfully, then went on with a friendly nod. He had figured in similar parties himself, and knew the disadvantages of rain.

Josephine and the grandmother spread out the luncheon, which was sumptuous; a bottle of red and one of white wine, a long twist of bread, slices of cold ragout of mutton, salad, and cheese. They ate as if that new savor of the beautiful which they that day apprehended extended to their food. The children especially never believed that the bread was like that which they usually ate, and the thin wine might have been bottled in Paradise. They discovered in it long after-tastes of wonderful flavors.

Their spirits were not in the least affected because they could not lunch under the trees as they had planned. They thought this much pleasanter. They chattered like blackbirds as they ate, filling the air with a silvery splutter of merriment. They were so unreservedly gay that one might have questioned if they had ever known sorrow, yet their ancestors had starved on the starved land before the Revolution, and there had been nothing except poverty and privation in their own



"Before a statue in the avenue."

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lot. But they had kept untarnished and unscathed through it all, as if it had been a precious family jewel, their power to make merry and keep holidays in the midst of their ceaseless pilgrimage through the valley of shadows.

It rained hard the rest of the day; at five o'clock they took the steamer for home. When they went on board there was no room under the awning on the forward deck, but they only laughed.

"If the sun shone it would put our eyes out," said Josephine.

A man on the deck aft, where they settled themselves, had a brown dog in a leash, and he had crawled under the bench, which put an idea into the grandmother's head:

"Creep under the bench, both of you," she said to the children.

"Yes, creep under the bench, 'twill keep you dry," said Josephine.

She caught Marie's blue skirt by the hem and turned it up over her head, and the child looked like an inverted bluebell. Then the boy and girl crept under the bench with the brown dog, who was friendly, and all the family laughed at the exquisite joke of it.

The banks of the old river, rosy and green and purple with new bloom, showed faintly through the heavy slant of the rain. The decks were glossy with wet. The fog and smoke waved overhead like shifting wings, everything was dull and dark, and it was cold, too, for the season. But Eli and his family in their poor, dripping holiday garments beamed, entrenched in their own indomitable sunshine of temperament.

And each of them carried home an especial treasure, fitting his or her especial needs, from the great Exposition.

Eli had to keep for the glorification of his whole future life the gaudy image of the Porte Monumentale, with the Frivolity of Paris at the summit. He was one whom a first impression stamped too deeply for erasure by others, and that was what he carried away with him.

Josephine gloated over a splendid court dress, foaming with lace, and glittering with silver over long lights of satin, in which her spirit would go clad, until earthly imaginations became a blank to her. The boy led home in triumph a toy-bear which walked and grunted, and the girl hugged close a flaxen-haired doll, who was a princess living in the French Palace of Diverse Industries. But it was the old grandmother who bore homeward the strangest treasure of all. She had paused, gaping and speechless, before a wonderful piece of embroidery by a patient artist of Japan. There she saw pictured gray, plumed geese, with long, curving necks, a-swim in a pool of satin needlework, and her imagination leapt to true life for the first time. The old woman had tended geese in her childhood, she fed and plucked them now, that being a labor suited to her later as well as her earlier years. Geese had always been for her the symbol of toil. Now she was able through that marvel of Japanese art to idealize her poor, common daily life. She sat on the deck of the river steamer, old and poor, dripping with rain which gleamed on her thin face like tears, but she looked out at the radiance which she had that day discovered over her life, and she laughed and chattered like a young girl out of the pure exuberance of her joy. And the others laughed and chattered with her, for the great inertia of happiness possessed them all.

AN AFTERNOON

BY WITTER BYNNER

THROUGH *the soft hours, forgetful on the grass,*
Watching the birds and clouds and things that pass,

How sweet it is thus without life to lie,
And without death how sweet it is to die!

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DEAD AND DOWN

BY

JOHN R. GILL

ILLUSTRATED BY LOUIS LOEB

WHEN Billy Banks was convicted of selling liquor to the Indians, and sentenced to pay a fine of $500 in addition to serving six months in jail, some said it was a shame to imprison a white man on Indian testimony. Others said the sentence was not heavy enough, seeing that two Chippewas had died from drinking a rare combination of "Pain-Killer" and wood alcohol obtained from him. But all said that when Billy was free again he would try to even up the score. He was a great fellow for keeping up grudges.

When he saw that the case was likely to go against him, Billy sold out his store at a pretty fair figure; but he still owned a quantity of standing timber on the old reservation, and that is how he was now, for the time being, a full-fledged lumberman.

Since his release he had made no secret of his attitude towards his former dusky patrons. Every Indian within fifty miles of the lake knew enough to keep clear of him. Old Mozomonie could testify to the wisdom of that course. So could Tayahta, who had to go around now with a broken nose, because he thought Billy was only bluffing. So it could not be denied that Big-Moose was imprudent this particular morning — doubly imprudent, seeing that the week before he had been at the camp on the same errand, and Billy had chased him off.

True enough, this morning Billy was supposed to have gone down to Section Ten to decide where he would run the logging road. He was an adept at this line of business, considering how short a time he had been lumbering. Under the provisions of the "Dead and Down" act the lumberman is licensed to appropriate as much green pine as he finds it necessary to remove while constructing his roads. Some of Billy's roads were marvelous to behold. They twisted about and squirmed, and almost doubled on themselves sometimes. And it was singular to notice how they always went through the choicest clumps of timber.

The mischief of it was, on this occasion, that when Billy was about half-way to his destination it suddenly occurred to him that he had failed to bring his compass along; and compasses are useful in the woods, when one is not quite sure where the section lines run. Thus it came about that when he returned to camp, in rather an unpleasant frame of mind, and found Big-Moose there, standing by the cook's quarters, he made an angry dash for him.

The Indian was earnestly engaged in bolting an assortment of breakfast-table scraps at the moment; but he was somewhat of a strategist, and had carefully thought out a plan of action for any contingency like the present — based upon the fact that the camp had two entrances. He quickly seized the most conspicuous remnants of his meal, and made an effective, but undignified, retreat by the side door.

"Now look you here!" said Billy, turning ferociously to the cook, who was fat and good-natured, "if I find you feeding that lazy, shiftless vagabond again I'll fire you right out of here after him. These Injuns has got the notion in their heads that Billy Banks is running a free boarding-house and hotel; but darn me if I don't break them of that way of thinking! The laziest lot of low-lived, lying hounds that ever went on two legs! If they won't work, let 'em starve. Do you hear what I say, Jackson?" he demanded hotly, detecting signs of dissatisfaction in his employee.

"I hear you," said Jackson, calmly, and turned on his heel. Billy looked sharply at him, hesitated a moment, and passed on.

When Pete Hansen came in to get his hand bandaged, Jackson gave vent to sundry forcible expressions of opinion.

"I'll tell you what, Pete," said he, "I'm

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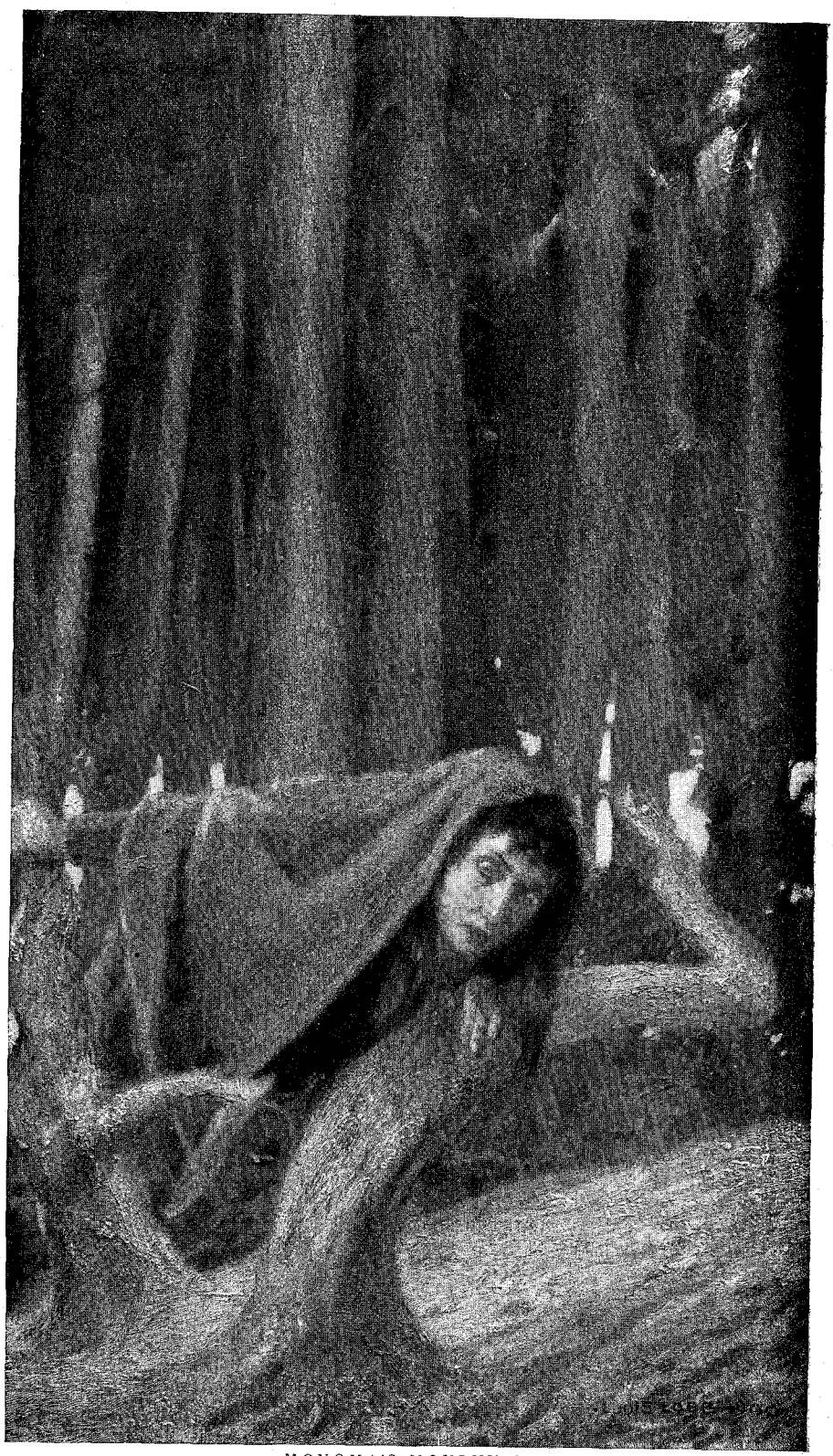

MONOMA'S MOURNING

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not anyway stuck on Injuns myself; but when one of 'em that's starving comes begging a meal around here, he's going to get it as long as I'm cook. And if Billy doesn't like it, he knows what he can do."

"He knows well enough that nobody else would stay with him, the old stiff!" Pete replied, "and it's a wonder to me you stay yourself, with him hopping on to you all the time about the grub going too fast, the way he does."

"Well," Jackson said, "I ain't figuring on staying here after Christmas, anyway; and I feel like chucking up the job long before that once in a while."

"This here Big-Moose," Pete continued, as he held first one foot to the stove and then the other, "is as decent an Injun as you can find around here. I've knowed him five or six years; I know his squaw, too. Since their reservation was taken away from them, and the country is settling up, there ain't enough game left for these here Chippewas to live on, and they don't seem able to get down to steady work like a white man. To be honest about it, Jackson, Billy Banks is the last man to have any right to be mean with an Injun. Look how he treated them when he run his store down at Cove, and look at the pine he's stealing from them right around here every day!" and Pete banged his ponderous fist on the table, making its loose boards clatter.

"That's no lie, boys," said a jovial voice behind them. "Talking about Big-Moose, are you? You ought to have seen him light out into the woods with his grub a few minutes ago. I thought there'd be trouble when I seen the old man coming back. Say, you know where his wigwam is located, down on Sandy Bay — his squaw and papoose are with him this time, too. Well, I heard the old man say, as I came in, that's he's going to start cutting down there in a couple of days. What time is it, Jackson? That's what I came in to ask. I'm as hungry as a bear in April."

It was near the end of November. Enough snow had fallen to soften the inequalities of the landscape. Even the pine stumps — ungainly, desolate, hideous — were less obtrusive under their partial covering of white. The swamps were frozen and the ground hard. Down by the lake side Big-Moose had erected his tepee.

This morning Big-Moose was absent. In fact, he had been away all night trying to get a deer, for he had seen a trail going into the big swamp the day before. Fresh deer trails were rare in those days. There was a time when he could have been sure of a fat buck or doe within half a mile of Sandy Bay any time of the year, to say nothing of partridges and other game. But now white settlers were coming in; most of the Chippewas had gone up to the White Earth Reservation, and the old hunting-grounds were noisy and crowded. Since the big fire had run through the woods, scarcely a rabbit, even, was to be seen. The noise of the swinging ax, the thud and crash of the falling tree, the harsh voices and shouts of lumbermen took the place of the primeval, unbroken hush. The lake abounded with fish: that could not be gainsaid; but one wearies of fish continually.

Monoma's thoughts were often sad. They were only at the beginning of winter, and already food was scarce. What would it be in January and February? Some people think the Chippewas are dogs and have no feeling. That is a mistake. If they could have read Monoma's heart when she thought over her people's many wrongs and the ignominy that had befallen her husband lately, and could have seen how doggedly she hated one Billy Banks, they would assuredly have changed their minds.

Monoma was moving at daybreak. She hoped for the speedy return of Big-Moose; and she hoped, above all things, that when he did return, it would be with a fat doe slung across his back. Not that she cared so much for herself, but little Bright-Eyes — ah, there was the rub!

They had lived on fish now many days, excepting for the rabbit she snared in the cottonwoods, a loaf of bread given her by a kind-hearted Swede settler, and the scraps from Banks's camp; but these items did not last long nor go far. Although she had given most of her share to Bright-Eyes, he did not seem to recover his spirits. He complained of his head hurting him, too. Even the bead necklace did not interest him very much, though he used to laugh heartily at it, and stretch out two chubby hands when it was held before him.

"It is because we have too much fish," Monoma told her husband confidently.

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"Even we who are strong and full grown sicken at the sight of fish continually. Go and seek venison to strengthen him."

The morning passed on, and he did not return. Evidently the chase had led him afar. When Bright-Eyes woke up, his mother fried some fish, but he could not eat, and only cried a little; and when she asked him anxiously what troubled him, and stroked his head, his baby tongue was not equal to the task: his head hurt; he wanted to sleep.

Would Big-Moose never come? Monoma thought that she would go to Pine Point and look over the lake for some trace of him, although, to be sure, he might not come that way at all. Still, it was not far, and Monoma trudged along. What was that? Voices in the distance. She stopped to listen. Yes, the lumbermen, no doubt. Now she could see them through a clearing. There were a dozen or more of them, and they were talking and looking around. One of them who seemed to be their leader spoke in a loud, gruff voice. Monoma looked at them angrily.

No, her husband was not in sight, and she was returning somewhat dejectedly to the tepee, when a sudden thought came to her. Perhaps she could get some food herself that Bright-Eyes would eat, even though she was a squaw! She cautiously approached the group of men, flitting from tree to tree until she was near enough to scan them closely. Certainly that must be Billy Banks. She knew him to be short, thickset, and of dark complexion. He had a scar on his cheek, received in a drunken brawl. She could see that plainly, for her eyes were like a hawk's. Big-Moose had once said her name ought to be Hawk-Eye.

Once assured of the man's identity, she withdrew, as carefully as she had approached, to a safe distance, then ran back to the tepee. Bright-Eyes was still sleeping. She called him softly, but he did not awake. For a moment she hesitated. She stood in the entrance, and looked once again in every direction. No one was in sight, but at some little distance she could hear the sharp blows of an ax descending upon its errand of destruction. Carefully reëntering the hut, Monoma gently drew a torn and ragged blanket across her child, thus concealing him from any cursory glance of an intruder, closed up the entrance to the tepee and sped away swiftly towards Banks's camp

Her course would have led her right by the chopping party. But she made a detour to avoid being seen. It was necessary for her purpose that Banks should not see her going in that direction. She also desired to be positively assured of his absence. As she slipped by, she was glad this time that she could hear his voice. He was shouting—always shouting, it seemed. He seemed to be directing some one in the direction of Sandy Bay, though; and that was bad, for the tepee stood there, and Bright-Eyes lay within.

Monoma had intended to take him with her, and as she went on her way she wondered if she had done well to leave him. Could one of these rough lumbermen do him any harm, if by chance he should discern the wigwam? She turned this over in her mind several times. But no, it could not be. Was it not plainly to be seen that he was the dearest, chubbiest, brightest, brownest papoose that ever gladdened the heart of any squaw? For what reason, indeed, were his name Bright-Eyes, if he were not bright? Even Moon-Face had to admit that this was the finest papoose in the Knife River band. Besides, Big-Moose might return any minute now. Anyhow, she could run nearly the whole way to the camp and back, so she would not be long absent. From Sandy Bay to Banks's camp was a little over two miles in a straight line, and half again as far by the zigzag trail.

"I want you boys to take in all the Norways up to the lake front"—it was Billy who was speaking. "The section line runs a little this side of it, but the rest's State land, and that don't count. Cornell and Nordstrom, you there! You might as well start in on the far end of the forty, and work down this way."

"All right, Billy," was the reply, "but you'd better come along and show us the exact spot where the line runs, seeing as we're always very particular not to cut over;" and Cornell gave him a sly dig.

It could never be charged against Billy that he maintained any degree of icy reserve or hauteur in his dealings with his men. They were all on free and easy terms with him.

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So he laughed hoarsely before he added, "I heard that my friend Big-Moose has located his shanty somewhere round here. If he has, he'll have to get out quick."

"Maybe he'll turn ugly," Cornell suggested meditatively.

"Oh, no fears," said Billy. "I've got him pretty well scared. I guess he won't bother none of my men. That's his outfit over there, I expect, right by the water. There don't seem to be any sign of life round it. You might as well fall a tree across it to wake them up."

Both men laughed uproariously at this sally. After receiving the necessary instructions from their employer, they began a vigorous attack on the furthest tree, Within a short time their line of progress brought them in close proximity to the tepee.

"Now," remarked Cornell to his partner, "we'd better see if them Injuns is round the premises, for our next tree'll come mighty near falling there, unless I'm much mistaken,"

"Come off! I can fall that pine a hundred feet away from the shanty," Nordstrom retorted.

"Well, that's all right, old man, I don't doubt but what you can do it if you want to; but I'm going to nose round the place, anyhow, to make sure. These Injuns get real fighting mad sometimes, and I don't mean to take any chances. One of these days Billy will wish he hadn't been quite so sure of himself. He stands a fair show of having a knife sticking in his ribs when he isn't figuring on it."

So saying, Cornell forced his way through the intervening bush and approached the tepee. It had every appearanee of being deserted, but he coughed and cleared his throat ostentatiously, and waited a while for developments before walking up.

There was no response to a dubious "*Bon jour, nidgee,*" the customary Chippewa salutation, and he ventured to glance inside.

"Nobody here, Nordstrom," he shouted, "but there's still a little live fire inside, and I guess they haven't gone very far. So I guess you'd better fall the tree this side of the place. It would be mean to smash in the wigwam for nothing."

A hurricane of dexterous blows, a scattering shower of chips, a momentary cessation, the insertion of a wedge, a few more swings of the ax, and with a sudden outburst of squeaks and groans, the lofty pine crashed towards the ground. But by chance a thick branch of the falling monarch caught in a dead oak tree, and pressed heavily against it. The strain was too much, and the two trees fell ponderously in unison.

"Gosh!" Cornell exclaimed. "We've smashed in the wigwam, after all. It's a good thing I looked in beforehand. If anybody had been in there there wouldn't be much left of him now, for the whole place is knocked to smithereens."

Jackson and his helper had just finished the energetic pastime of swinging a sackful of clashing, jingling cutlery to and fro, this being the most approved method of drying the articles with despatch, After wiping out the pots and pans, the cook sent his helper out to empty the slop buckets, while he bustled around with preparations for the dinner; for Jackson was kept on the run from morn till night, and pretty late at night, too. A minute later his assistant returned with an expression of face designed to set forth the fact that its owner was possessed of highly mysterious information.

"What's got you now, boy?" Jackson demanded as the youth approached.

"Another of them blessed Injuns is waiting out there, old man, a squaw this time, and a good-looking one, too! She seems kind of backward about coming up, and said something about being hungry. I guess you'd better go out and see what she wants. You can talk their lingo."

Jackson gave a prolonged whistle, muttered to himself, and looked out of the window. "That's her beside the tool-shed, is it? Look's like Big-Moose's squaw, if I ain't mistaken. Suppose he's scared to come around after the last time Billy got after him."

"Well," said the youth, "I don't blame him for that, but it's a pretty smooth trick for him to send his squaw instead. Maybe he thinks Billy will be hypnotized. Going to feed her?" he suddenly asked, as Jackson returned to the pantry and made a rough parcel of bread and butter, a few slices of ham, and some cookies.

"Yep," said he. "If Billy was here, I suppose I'd lose my job for doing it; but since he ain't, here goes, for I guess this

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ought to fix her." And he good-naturedly ambled out of the door.

"Seems to me," remarked Jack Hornish, as he sat with the rest of the gang in an irregular circle about a roaring fire, devouring his midday meal—"seems to me that I heard a yell down on the beach just now. See anything, Mike?"

Mike turned his head in the direction indicated, and was about to reply in the negative, when the sound which had first attracted attention burst upon their ears again, and this time too distinctly to be denied. It was a peculiar, agonized cry, and there seemed something uncanny in its wavering notes as they mingled with the murmur of the pines and the ceaseless plash-plash of the lake.

"What in blazes can that be?" Hornish inquired solicitously, standing up to get a better view.

"Sounded like a woman's voice," said Nordstrom.

"That's what it is, boys—a squaw!" exclaimed Mike, somewhat jocularly. "And she's down by that there tepee you fellows knocked over this morning, just letting you understand, don't you see, that she objects to your way of doing business round here."

"She seems to be looking for something," added Cornell meditatively, removing a dirty cob pipe from his mouth. "Listen to her! Beats everything I ever heard! The old girl is decidedly worked up about something. Guess I'd better go down and see if we can't straighten things out some way."

"Aw, sit down, man!" Hornish shouted contemptuously. "Don't bother your head one way or another about an Injun. She can put up another wigwam just as good as new inside of fifteen minutes. This 'll teach her to have more sense than to build one where the pine might fall."

"Maybe you're right," Cornell conceded, as he resumed his seat; "but," he added uneasily, "I never knew an Injun squaw to holler like that unless she was drunk, and *that* squaw don't drink."

An hour later Big-Moose trudged quietly past the lumbermen, toward his tepee, a fat doe slung across his back. He paid no attention to the half-jocular congratulations of one or two of the men upon his success, nor the raillery of others, for he was both tired and hungry.

"Wonder how he'll act when he finds the shape things are in," Cornell remarked. "Can you make out, pardner?"

"Yes," replied Nordstrom, from his coign of vantage. "He ain't doing a thing but standing there like a wooden man. But his squaw is jumping round and hollering to beat the band."

"I didn't think they'd make so much fuss over the smash-up, but since they do, why, I'm just as well satisfied that we are through with that end of the forty for a day or two;" and Cornell picked up his ax again.

Their line of work led them further from the lake for a while. A full half-hour later Jack Hornish passed their way. "Say," said he, gravely, "there's something wrong with that squaw. She acts like a crazy woman. I was up on the section line a few minutes ago, and I saw them both. She's laying down flat beside the old wigwam, and he's standing there with an ugly look on his face."

"I wouldn't wonder if there's trouble brewing," Nordstrom remarked.

"Me neither," Cornell ungrammatically assented, as he resumed his work.

The two woodsmen were right. Trouble came, and came speedily, and in due time news of it reached the outside world. The Minneapolis *Blower's* version of it was this:

ANOTHER GOOD INDIAN.

DESPERATE AFFRAY IN THE WOODS.

Special to Minneapolis "Blower."

PINEVILLE, MINN., *November* 26th.

A messenger just in from the woods north of this place reports that an attack was made on William Banks, a well-known lumberman, by an Indian named Big-Moose, whom he had warned off his camp. It appears that the Indian was seen late Wednesday afternoon lurking near the camp, with a shot-gun, and as his object was suspected, Banks was notified. He consequently armed himself, and returned to the camp by a circuitous route, but was seen and fired upon by Big-Moose.

Several shots were exchanged between them, and when assistance came it was found that Banks was slightly wounded, while his assailant was killed outright. The latter is not known to have had any other motive in making the attack than a desire for revenge, his wigwam having been accidentally destroyed by the lumbermen. It is supposed that he had been drinking.

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The Banshee's Halloween

BY
HERMINIE TEMPLETON

ILLUSTRATED BY GARTH JONES

HALLOWEEN night to all unhappy ghosts is about the same as St. Patrick's day is to you or to me—'tis a great holiday in every church-yard. An' no one knew this betther or felt it keener than did Darby O'Gill that same Halloween night as he stood on his own door-step, with the paper of black tay for Eilleen McCarthy safely stowed away in the crown of his top hat.

No one in that Barony was quicker than he at an act of neighborly kindness. But now, as he huddled himself together in the shelther of his own eaves, an' thought of the dangers before, an' of the cheerful fire an' comfortable bed he was leaving behint, black raybellion rushed shouting across his heart.

"Oh my, oh my, what a perishin' night to turn a man out into," he says, "It'd be half a comfort to know I was goin' to be kilt before I got back, just as a warnin' to Bridget," says he.

The misthrayted lad turned a sour eye on the chummultuous weather, an' groaned deep as he pulled closer about his chowldhers the cape of his great coat, an' plunged into the daysarted an' flooded roadway.

Howsumever, 'twas not the pelting rain, nor the lashing wind, nor yet the pitchy darkness that bothered the heart out of him as he wint splashing an' stumbling along the road. A thought of something more raylentless than the storm, more mystarious than the night's blackness, put pounds of lead into the lad's unwilling brogues, for somewhere in the shrouding darkness that covered McCarthy's house the Banshee was waiting this minute, perhaps, ready to jump out at him as soon as he came near her.

And oh, if the Banshee nabbed him there, what in the wide worruld would the poor lad do to save himself?

At the rayalization of this sitiwation the goose flesh crept up his back, an' settled on his neck an' chowldhers. He began to cast about in his mind for a bit of cheer or a scrap of comfort, as a man in such sarcumstances will do. So, grumblin' an' sore-hearted, he turned over Bridget's parting worruds. "If one goes on an errant of marcy," Bridget had said, "a score of God's white angels, with swoords in their hands, march before an' beside an' afther him, keeping his path free from danger."

He felt anxious in his hat for the bit of charitable tay he was bringin', an' was

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glad to find it there safe an' dhry enough, though the rest of him was drenched through an' through.

"Isn't this an act of charity I'm doin', to be bringin' a cooling dhrink to a dyin' woman?" he axed himself aloud. "To be sure it is. Well, then, what rayson have I to be afeared?" says he, pokin' his two hands into his pockets. Arrah, it's aisy enough to bolster up one's heart with wise sayin's an' hayroic praycepts when sitting commodious by one's own fire; but talkin' wise worruds to one's self is mighty poor comfort whin you're on the lonely high road of a Halloween night, with a churchyard waitin' for ye on the top of the hill not two hundred yards away. If there was only one star to break through the thick sky an' shine for him, if there was but one friendly cow to low or a distant cock to break the teeming silence, 'twould put some heart into the man. But not a sound was there, only the swish and wailing of the wind through the inwisible hedges.

"What's the matter with the whole worruld? Where is it wanished to?" says Darby. "It a ghost were to jump at me from the church-yard wall, where would I look for help? To run is no use," he says, "an' to face it is——"

Just then the current of his misdoubtings ran whack up against a sayin' of ould Peggy O'Callaghan. Mrs. O'Callaghan's repitation for truth and voracity whin it come to fairy tales or ghost stories, be it known, was aquil if not shuparior to the best in Tipperary. Now Peggy had towld Ned Mullin, an' Ned Mullin had towld Bill Donahue the tinker, an' the tinker had adwised Darby that no one need ever be afeared of ghosts if he only had the courage to face thim.

Peggy said, "The poor crachures ain't roamin' about shakin chains an' moanin' an' groanin' just for the sport of scarin' people, nor yet out of maneness. 'Tis always a throuble that's on their minds—a message they want sint, a saycret they're endayvoring to unload. So, instead of flyin' from the onhappy things, as most people generally do," she said, "one should walk up bowld to the apparraytion, be it gentle or common, male or faymale, an' say, 'What throubles ye, sir?' or, 'What's amiss with ye, ma'am?' An' take my worrud for it," says she, "ye'll find yourself a boneyfactor to them whin you laste expect it," she says.

'Twas a quare idee, but not so onrayson-able afther all whin one comes to think of it, an' the knowledgeable man fell to day-liberatin' whether he'd have the hardness to folly it out if the chanst came. Sometimes he thought he would, then agin he was sure he wouldn't. For Darby O'Gill was one who bint quick undher throuble like a young three before a hurrycane, but he only bint, the throuble never broke him. So, at times, his courage wint down to a spark like the light of a candle in a gust of wind, but before you could turn on your heel 'twas blazing up strong and fiercer than before.

Whilst thus contimplatin' an' meditaytin', his foot sthruck the bridge in the hollow just below the berringround, an' there, as the boy paused a minute, churning up bravery enough to carry him up the hill an' past the mystarious grave-stones, there came a short quiver of lightning, an' in its sudden flare he was sure he saw not tin yards away, an' comin' down the hill towards him, a dim shape that took the breath out of his body.

"Oh, be the powers!" he gasped, his courage emptying out like wather from a spilt pail.

It moved, as low, gray, formless thing, without a head, an', so far as he was able to judge, it might be about the size of an ulephant. The parsecuted lad swung himself sideways in the road, one arrum over his eyes, an' the other stretched out at full length, as if to ward off the turrible wisitor.

The first thing that began to take any shape in his bewildhered brain was Peggy O'Callaghan's adwise. He thried to folly it out, but a chatterin' of teeth was the only sound he med. An' all this time a thraymendous splashin', like the floppin' of whales, was coming nearer an' nearer.

The splashin' sthopped not three feet away, an' the han'ted man felt in the spine of his back an' in the calves of his legs that a powerful unhowly monsther towered over him.

Why he didn't swoonge in his thracks is the wondher. He says he would have dhropped at last if it weren't for the distant bark of his own good dog Sayser, that put a throb of courage intil his bones. At that friendly sound he opened his two dhry lips an' stutthered this sayin':

"Whoever you are, an' whatever shape ye come in, take heed that I'm not afeared,"

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he says. "I command ye to tell me your throubles, an' I'll be your boneyfactor. Then gc back dacint an' rayspectable where you're buried. Spake, an' I'll listen," says he.

He waited for a rayply, an' getting none, a hot splinther of shame at bein' so badly frightened turned his sowl into wexation. "Spake up," he says, "but come no furder, for if you do, be the hokey, I'll take one thry at ye, ghost or no ghost," he says. Once more he waited, an', as he was lowering the arrum from his eyes for a peek, the ghost spoke up, an' its answer came in

Although Darby couldn't understhand what the owl was sayin', he was startled be the blood-curdlin' hoot, an' that same hoot saved Solomon from any exthrayornery throuncin', bekase as the angry man sthopped to harken there flashed on him the rayalization that he was bating an' crool maulthraytin' a blessing in dishguise, for this same Solomon had the repitation of being the knowingist, sensiblist thing which walked on four legs in that parish. He was a fayvorite with young an' old, especially with childher, an' Mrs. Kilcannon said she could talk to him

"'Ye murdherin' big-headed imposture!'"

two pittiful disthressed roars. A damp breath puffed acrost his face an' openin' his eyes, what should the lad see but the two dhrooppin' ears of Solomon, Mrs. Kilcannon's gray donkey. Foive different kinds of dishgust biled up into Darby's throat an almost sthrangled him. "Ye murdherin' big-headed imposture!" he gasped.

Half a minute afther a brown hoot owl, which was shelthered in a near-by black thorn three, called out to his brother's fambly, which inhabited the belfry of the chapel above on the hill, that some black-minded spalpeen had hoult of Solomon Kilcannon be the two ears an' was kickin' the ribs out of him, an' that the langwidge the man was usin' to the poor baste was worse than scan'lous.

as if he were a human, an' she was sure he understhood. In the face of thim facts the knowledgeable man changed his chune, an' puttin' his arrum friendly around the disthressed animal's neck he said:

"Aren't ye ashamed of yerself, Solomon, to be payradin' an' mayandherin' around the church-yard Halloween night, dishguisin' yerself this a-way as an outlandish ghost, an' you havin' the foine repitation for dacincy an' good manners?" he says, excusin' himself. "I'm ashamed of you, so I am, Solomon," says he, haulin' the baste about in the road an' turning him till its head faced once more the hill-side. "Come back with me now to Cormac McCarthy's, avourneen. We've aich been in worse

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company, I'm thinkin'; at laste you have, Solomon," says he.

At that, kind an' friendly enough, the forgivin' baste turned with him, an' the two, keeping aich other slithering company, went stumblin' an' scramblin' up the hill toward the chapel. On the way Darby kept up a one-sided conwersation about all manner of things, just so that the ring of a human woice, even if 'twas only his own, would take a bit of the crool lonesomeness out of the dark hedges.

"Did you notice McDonald's sthrame as you came along the night, Solomon? It must be a roarin' torrent be this, with the pourin' rains, an' we'll have to cross it," says he. "We could go over McDonald's stone bridge that stands ferninst McCarthy's house, with only Nolan's meadow betwixt the two, but," says Darby, laying a hand confaydential on the ass's wet back, "'tis only a fortnit since long Faylix, the blind beggar man, fell from the same bridge and broke his neck, an' what more natural," he axed, "than the ghost of Faylix would be celebraytin' its first Halloween *as a* ghost at the spot where he was kilt?"

You may believe me or believe me not, but at thim worruds Solomon sthopped dead still in his thracks, an' rayfused to go another step till Darby coaxed him on be sayin':

"Oh, thin, we won't cross it if you're afeared, little man," says he; "but we'll take the path through the fields on this side of it, and we'll cross the sthrame by McCarthy's own wooden foot-bridge. 'Tis within tunty feet of the house. Oh, ye needn't be afeared" he says, again. "I've seen the cows cross it, so it 'll surely hould the both of us."

A sudden raymembrance whipped into his mind of how tall the stile was ladin' into Nolan's meadow, an' the boy was puzzling deep to know how was Solomon to climb acrost that stile, whin all at once the gloomy western gate of the grave-yard rose quick be their side.

"Fufty ghosts, all in their shrouds, sat cheek be jowl."

The two shied to the opposite hedge, an' no wondher they did.

Fufty ghosts, all in their shrouds, sat cheek be jowl along the church-yard wall, never caring a ha'porth for the wind or the rain.

There was little Ted Rogers, the humpback, who dhrownded in Mullin's well four years come Michelmas; there was black Mulligan, the game-keeper, who shot

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Ryan, the poacher, sittin' with a gun on his lap, an' he glowerin'; beside the gamekeeper sat the poacher, with a jagged black hole in his forehead; there was Thady Finnegan, the scholar who was disappinted in love, an' died of a daycline; furder on sat Mrs Houlihan, who dayparted this life from ateing of pizen musherooms; next to *her* sat—oh, a hundhred others!

Not that Darby *saw* thim, do ye mind. He had too good sinse to look that way at all. He walked with his head turned out to the open fields, an' his eyes squeeged shut. But something in his mind toult him they were there, an' he felt in the marrow of his bones that if he gave them the encouragement of one glance two or three'd slip off the wall an' come moanin' over to tell him their throubles.

What Solomon saw an' what Solomon heard as the two wint shrinkin' along 'll never be known to living man. But once he gave a jump, an' twice Darby felt him thrimblin, an' whin they raiched at last the chapel wall, the baste broke into a swift throt. Purty soon he galloped, an' Darby wint galloping with him, till two yallow blurs of light across in a field to the left marked the windys of the stonecutter s cottage.

'Twas a few steps only thin to the stile over into Nolan's meadow, an' there the two stopped, lookin' helpless at aich other. Solomon had to be lifted, and there was the throuble. Three times Darby thried be main strength to hist his compagnon up the steps, but in wain, an' Solomon was clane dishgusted.

Only for the tendher corn on our hayro's left little toe, I think maybe that at length an' at last the pair would have got safe over. The kind-hearted lad had the donkey's two little hoofs planted on the top step, an' whilst he himself was liftin' the rest of the baste in his arrums, Solomon got onaisy that he was goin' to be trun, an' so began to twisht an' squirm. Of course, as he did, Darby slipped, an' wint thump on his back agin the stile, with Solomon sittin' comfortable on top of the lad's chist. But that wasn't the worst of it. For as the baste scrambled up he planted one hard little hoof on Darby's left foot, an' the knowledgeable man let a yowl out of him that must have frightened all the ghosts within miles.

Seein' he'd done wrong, Solomon boulted for the middle of the road an' stood there wirey an' attentive, listening to the names flung at him from where his late comerade sat on the lowest step of the stile nursin' the hurted foot.

'Twas an excited owl in the belfry that this time spoke up an' shouted to his brother down in the black thorn.

"Come up, come up quick!" it says. "Darby O'Gill is just afther calling Solomon Kilcannon a malayfactor."

Darby rose at last, an' as he climbed over the stile he turned to shake his fist toward the middle of the road.

"Bad luck to ye for a thick-headed ongrateful informer!" he says. "You go your way, an' I'll go mine; we're sundhers," says he. So sayin' the crippled man wint limpin' an' grumplin' down the borreen through the meadow, whilst this desarted friend sint rayproachful brays afther him that would go to your heart.

The throbbin' of our hayro's toe banished all pity for the baste, an' even all thoughts of the Banshee, till a long gurgling, swooping sound in front toult him that his fears about the rise in McDonald's sthrame were undher rather than over the actwil conditions.

Fearin' that the wooden foot-bridge might be swept away, as it had been the year purvious, he hurried on.

Most time this sthrame was only a quiet little brook that ran betwixt purty green banks, with hardly enough wather in it to turn the broken wheel in Chartres' runed mill; but to-night it swept along, an angry, snarlin', growlin' river that overlept its banks an' dhragged widly at the swaying willows.

Be a narrow throw of light from McCarthy's side windy our thraveller could see the maddened wather sthrivin' an' tearin' to pull with it the props of the little foot-bridge, an' the boards shook an' the center swayed undher his feet as he passed over. "Bedad, I'll not cross this way goin' home at any rate," he says, looking back at it.

The worruds were no sooner out of his mouth that there was a crack, an' the middle of the foot-bridge, lifted in the air, twishted round for a second, an' then hurled itself into the sthrame, laving the two inds still standing in their place on the banks.

"Tunder an' turf!" he cried, "I musn't

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forget to tell the people within of this, for if ever there was a thrap set by evil spirits to dhrownd a poor unwary mortial, there it stands. Oh, ain't the ghosts turrible wicious on Halloween!"

He stood dhrippin' a minute on the threshold, listening; thin, without knockin', lifted the latch an' stepped softly into the house.

II

Two candles burned above the blue and white chiney dishes on the table, a bright fire blazed on the hearth, an' over in the corner where the low bed was set the stone-cutter was on his knees beside it.

Eilleen lay on her side, her shining hair sthrealed out on the pillow. Her purty, flushed face was turned to Cormac, who knelt, with his forehead hid on the bed covers. The Colleen's two little hands were clasped about the great fist of her husband, an' she was talking low, but so airnest that her whole life was in every worrud.

"God save all here," said Darby, takin' off his hat; but there was no answer. So deep were Cormac an' Eilleen in some conwersation they were having together that they didn't hear his coming. The knowledgeable man didn't know what to do. He rayalized that a husband and wife about to part forever were lookin' into aich other's hearts for maybe the last time. So he just sthood, shifting from one foot to the other, watching thim, unable to daypart, an' not wishin' to obtrude.

"Oh, it isn't death at all that I fear," Eilleen was saying. "No, no, Cormac asthore, 'tis not that I'm misdoubtful of; but, ochone mavrone, 'tis you I fear!"

The kneeling man gave one swift upward glance, and dhrew his face nearer to the sick wife. She wint on thin, speaking tindher an' half smiling an' sthrokin' his hand.

"I know, darlint, I know well, so you needn't tell me, that if I were to live with you a thousand years you'd never sthray in mind or thought to any other woman, but it's when I'm gone—when the lonesome avenings folly aich other through days an' months, an' maybe years, an' you sitting here at this fireside without one to speak to, an' you so han'some an' grand, an' with the penny or two we've put away——"

"Oh, asthore machree, why can't ye banish thim black thoughts?" says the stone-cutter. "Maybe," he says, "the Banshee will not come again. Ain't all the counthry-side prayin' for ye this night, an' didn't Father Cassidy himself bid you to hope? The saints in Heaven couldn't be so crool," says he.

But the colleen wint on as though she hadn't heard him or as if he hadn't interupted her.

"An, listen," says she, "they'll come urging ye, the neighbors, an' raysonin' with you. Your own flesh an' blood 'll come, an' no doubt me own with them, an' they all sthriving to push me out of your heart, an' to put another woman there in my place. I'll know it all; but I won't be able to call to you, Cormac machree, for I'll be lying silent undher the grass or undher the snow up behind the church."

While she was sayin' thim last worruds, although Darby's heart was meltin' for Eilleen, his mind began running over the colleens of that townland to pick out the one who'd be most likely to marry Cormac in the ind. You know how far-seeing an' quick-minded was the knowledgeable man. He settled sudden on the Hanlon girl, an' daycided at once that she'd have Cormac before the year was out. The ondacincy of such a thing made him furious at her.

He says to himself, half crying, "Why then, bad cess to you for a shameless, red-haired, forward baggage, Bridgeen Hanlon, to be runnin' after the man, an' throwing yourself in his way, an' Eilleen not yet cowld in her grave?" he says.

While he was saying them things to himself, McCarthy had been whuspering fierce to his wife, but what it was the stone-cutter said the friend of the fairies couldn't hear. Eilleen herself spoke clear enough in answer, for the faver gave her onnatural strength.

"Don't think," she says, "that it's the first time this thought has come to me. Two months ago, whin I was sthrong an' well an' sittin' happy as a meadow lark at your side, the same black shadow dhrifted over me heart. The worst of it an' the hardest to bear of all is that they'll be in the right, for what good can I do for you whin I'm undher the clay?" says she. "It's different with a woman. If you were taken, an' I left, I'd wear your face in

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"'Twas the Banshee!"

my heart through all me life, an' ax for no sweeter company."

"Eilleen," says Cormac, liften' his hand, an' his woice was hoarse as the roar of the say, "I swear to you on me bendid knees——"

With her hand on his lips she sthopped him. "There'll come on ye by daygress a great cravin' for sympathy, a hunger an' a longing for affection, an' you'll have only the shadow of my poor wanished face to comfort you, an' a recollection of a woice that is gone forever. A new warm face'll keep pushin' itself betwixt us——"

"Bad luck to that red-headed hussy," mutthered Darby, looking around disthressed. "I'll warn Father Cassidy of her an' of her intintions the day afther the funeral."

There was silence for a minute; Cormac, the poor lad, was sobbing like a child. By-an'-by Eilleen wint on again, but her woice was failing, an' Darby could see that her cheeks were wet.

"The day'll come when you'll give over," she says. "Ah, I see how it'll all ind. Afther that you'll visit the churchyard be stealth, so as not to make the other woman sore-hearted."

"My, oh my, isn't she the far-seein' woman!" thought Darby.

"Little childher'll come," she says, "an' their soft warm arrums will hould you away. By-an'-by you'll not go where I'm laid at all, an' all thoughts of these few happy months we've spent together—Oh! Mother in heaven, how happy they were——"

The girl started to her elbow, for sharp an' sudden a wild, wailing cry just outside the windy startled the shuddering darkness. 'Twas a long cry of terror and of grief, not shrill, but peircing as a knife thrust. Every hair on Darby's head stood up an' pricked him like a needle. 'Twas the Banshee!

"Whist, listen!" says Eilleen. "Oh, Cormac asthore, it's come for me again." With that, stiff with terror, she buried herself undher the pillows.

A second cry follyed the first, only this time it was longer, and rose an' swelled

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into a kind of a song, that broke at last into the heart-breakingest moan that ever fell on mortial ears. "Ochone!" it sobbed.

The knowledgeable man, his blood turned to ice, his legs thremblin' like a hare's, stood looking in spite of himself at the black windy panes, expecting some frightful wision.

Afther that second cry the woice balanced itself up an' down into the awful death keen. One worrud made the whole song, and that was the turruble worrud forever.

"Forever an' forever, oh, forever," swung the wild keen, until all the deep meaning of the worrud burned itself into Darby's sowl, thin the heart-breakin' sob, "Ochone!" inded always the varse.

Darby was just wondherin' whether he himself wouldn't go mad with fright, whin he gave a sudden jump at a hard-sthrained woice which spoke up at his very elbow.

"Darby O'Gill," it said, and it was the stone-cutter who spoke, "do you hear the death keen? It came last night; it 'll come to-morrow night at this same hour, an' thin — Oh, my God!"

Darby tried to answer, but he could only stare at the white set face an' the sunken eyes of the man before him.

There was, too, a kind of fierce quiet in the way McCarthy spoke that made Darby shiver.

The stone-cutter wint on talkin' the same as though he was goin' to dhrive a bargain. "They say you're a knowledgeable man, Darby O'Gill," he says, "an' that on a time you spint six months with the fairies. Now I make you this fair, square offer," he says, laying a forefinger in the palm of the other hand. "I have fifty-three pounds that Father Cassidy's keeping for me. Fifty-three pounds," he says agin. "An' I have this good bit of a farm that me father was born on, an' his father was born on, too, an' the grandfather of him. An' I have the grass of seven cows. You know that. Well, I'll give it all to you, all, every stiver of it, if you'll only go outside an' dhrive away that cursed singer." He threw his head to one side an' looked anxious up at Darby.

The knowledgeable man racked his brain for something to speak, but all he could say was, "I've brought you a bit of tay from the wife, Cormac."

McCarthy took the tay with unfeeling hands, an' wint on talking in the same dull way. Only this time there came a hard lump in his throat now an' then that he sthopped to swally.

"The three cows I have go, of course, with the farm," says he. "So does the pony an' the five pigs. I have a good plow an' a foine harrow; but you must lave me my stone-cutting tools, so little Eilleen an' I can earn our way wherever we go, an' it's little the crachure ates the best of times."

The man's eyes were dhry an' blazin', no doubt his mind was cracked with grief. There was a lump in Darby's throat, too, but for all that he spoke up scolding-like.

"Arrah, talk rayson, man," he says, putting two hands on Cormac's chowldhers. "If I had the wit or the art to banish the Banshee, wouldn't I be happy to do it an' not a fardin' to pay?"

"Well, then," says Cormac, scowling, an' pushin' Darby to one side, "I'll face her myself — I'll face her an' choke that song in her throat if Sattin himself stood at her side."

With those worruds, an' before Darby could sthop him, the stone-cutter flung open the door an' plunged out into the night. As he did so the song outside sthopped. Suddenly a quick splashing of feet, hoarse cries and shouts gave tidings of a chase. The half-crazed gossoon had stharted the Banshee — of that there could be no manner of doubt. A raymembrance of the awful things that she might do to his friend paythrefied the heart of Darby.

Even afther these cries died away he stood listening a full minute, the sowls of his two brogues glued to the floor. The only sounds he heard now were the deep ticking of a clock an' a cricket that chirped slow an' solemn on the hearth, an' from somewhere outside came the sorrowful cry of a whippoorwill. All at once a thought of the broken bridge an' of the black treacherous wathers caught him like the blow of a whip, an' for a second drove from his mind even the fear of the Banshee.

In that one second, an' before he rayalized it, the lad was out undher the dhripping trees, and running for his life toward the broken foot-bridge. The night was whirling an' beating above him like the flapping of thraymendous wings, but as he ran Darby thought he heard above the rush of the wather and through the swish of the wind Cormac's woice calling him.

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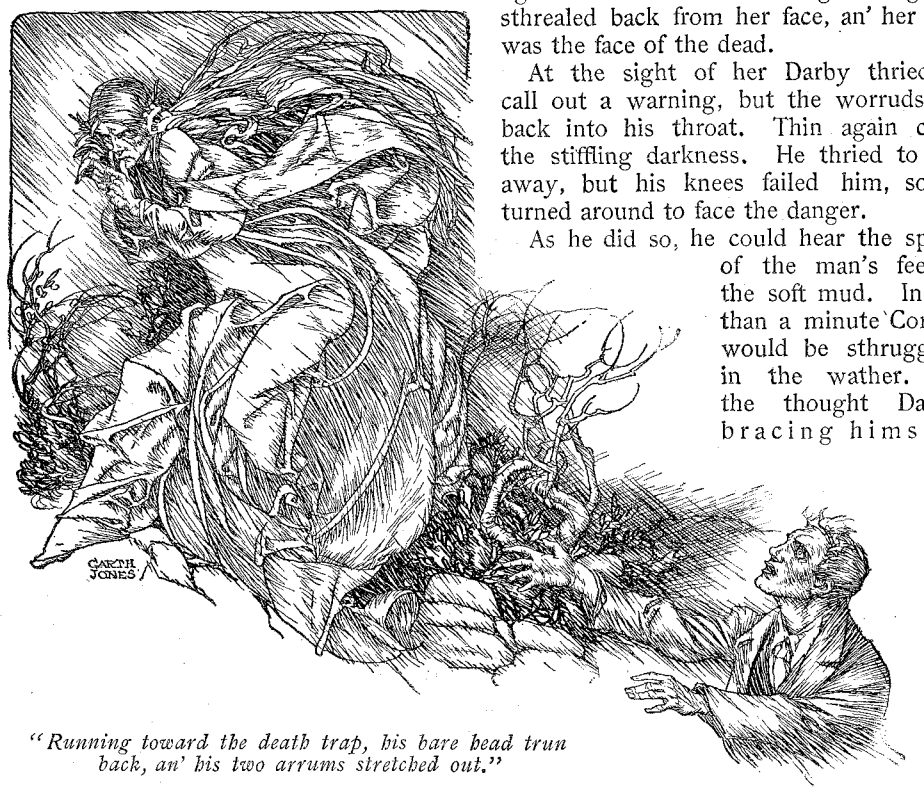
The friend of the fairies sthopped at the edge of the foot-bridge to listen. Although the storm had almost passed, a spiteful flare of lightning lept up now an' agin out of the western hills, an' afther it came the dull rumble of distant thunder; the water splashed spiteful against the bank, and Darby saw that seven good feet of the bridge had been torn out of its center, laving uncovered that much of the black deep flood.



"Running toward the death trap, his bare head trun back, an' his two arrums stretched out."

He stood sthraining his eyes an' ears in wondheration, for now the woice of Cormac sounded from the other side of the sthrame, and seemed to be floating toward him through the field over the path Darby himself had just thravelled. At first he was mightily bewildered at what might bring Cormac on the other side of the brook, till all at once the murdhering schame of the Banshee burst in his mind like a gunpowdher explosion.

Her plan was as plain as day, she meant to dhrownd the stone-cutter. She had led the poor daysthracted man straight from his own door down to and over the new stone bridge, an' was now dayludherin' him on the other side of the sthrame, back agin up the path that led to the broken foot-bridge.

In the glare of a sudden blinding flash from the middle of the sky Darby saw a sight he'll never forget till the day he dies. Cormac, the stone-cutter, was running toward the death trap, his bare head trun back, an' his two arrums stretched out in front of him. A little above an' just out of raich of them, plain an' clear as Darby ever saw his wife Bridget, was the misty white figure of a woman. Her long waving hair sthreaked back from her face, an' her face was the face of the dead.

At the sight of her Darby thried to call out a warning, but the worruds fell back into his throat. Thin again came the stiffling darkness. He thried to run away, but his knees failed him, so he turned around to face the danger.

As he did so, he could hear the splash of the man's feet in the soft mud. In less than a minute Cormac would be sthruggling in the wather. At the thought Darby, bracing himself, body and sowl, let a warning howl out of him.

"Howld where you are!" he shouted, "She wants to dhrownd ye, the bridge is broke in the middle!" But he could tell from the rushing footsteps an' from the hoarse swelling curses which came nearer an' nearer every second that the dayludhered man, crazed with grief, was deaf an' blind to everything but the figure that floated before his eyes.

At that hopeless instant Bridget's parting worruds popped into Darby's head.

"When one goes on an errant of marcy, a score of God's white angels, with swoords in their hands, march before an' beside an'

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afther him, keeping his path free from danger."

How it all came to pass he could never rightly tell, for he was like a man in a dhrame; but he recollects well standing on the broken ind of the bridge, Bridget's worruds ringing in his ears, the glistening black gulf beneath his feet, an' he swinging his arrums for a jump. Just one thought of herself and the childher, as he gathered himself for a spring, an' then he cleared the gap like a bird.

As his two feet touched the other side of the gap a terrific screech — not a screech ayther, but an angry, frightened shriek — almost split his ears. He felt a rush of cowld dead air agin his face, an' caught a whiff of newly turned clay in his nosthrils. Something white sthopped quick before him, an' then with a second shriek it shot high in the darkness, an' disappeared. Darby had frightened the wits out of the Banshee.

The instant afther the two men were clinched an' rowling over an' over aich other down the muddy bank, their legs splashing as far as the knees in the dangerous wather, an' McCarthy raining wake blows on the knowledgeable man's head an' breast.

Darby felt himself going into the river. Bits of the bank caved undher him, splashing into the current, an' the lad's heart began clunking up an' down like a churn dash.

"Lave off, lave off!" he cried, as soon as he could catch his breath. "Do you take me for the Banshee?" says he, giving a dusperate lurch an' rowling himself on top of the other.

"Who are you then? If you're not a ghost you're the divil at any rate," gasped the stone-cutter.

"Bad luck to ye!" cried Darby, clasping both arrums of the hanted man. "I'm no ghost, let lone the divil. I'm only your friend Darby O'Gill."

Lying there breathing hard, they stared into the faces of aich other a little space, till the poor stone-cutter began to cry.

"Oh, is that you, Darby O'Gill? Where is the Banshee? Oh, haven't I the bad fortune?" he says, sthriving to raise himself.

"Rise up," says Darby, lifting the man to his feet an' steadying him there. The stone-cutter stared about like one stunned be a blow.

"I don't know where the Banshee flew; but do you go back to Eilleen as soon as you can," says the friend of the fairies. "Not that way, man alive," he says, as Cormac started to climb the foot-bridge — it's broke in the middle—go down an' cross the stone bridge. I'll be afther you in a minute," he says.

Without a worrud, meek now and biddable as a child, Cormac turned, an' Darby saw him hurry away into the blackness.

The raysons Darby raymained behind were two: first an' foremost, he was a bit vexed at the way his clothes were muddied an' dhraggled, an' himself had been pounded an' hammered; and second, he wanted to think. He had a quare cowld feeling in his mind that something was wrong — a kind of a foreboding, as one might say.

As he stood thinking a rayalization of the caylamity sthruck him all at once like a rap on the jaw — he had lost his foine briar pipe. The lad groaned as he began the anxious sarch. He slapped furiously at his chist an' side pockets, he dived into his throwsers an' great coat, and at last, sprawlin' on his hands an' feet like a monkey, he groped savagely through the wet stickey clay.

"This comes," says the poor lad, grumblin' an' gropin', "of pokin' your nose into other people's business. Hallo, what's this?" he says, straightening himself. "'Tis a comb. Be the powers of pewther, 'tis the Banshee's comb!"

An' so indade it was. He had picked up a goold comb the length of your hand an' almost the width of your two fingers. About an inch of one ind was broken off, an' dhropped into Darby's palm. Without thinkin' he put the broken bit into his weskit pocket, an' raised the biggest half close to his eyes the betther to view it.

"May I never see sorrow," he says, "if the Banshee mustn't have dhropped her comb. Look at that now. Folks do be sayin' that 'tis this gives her the foine singing woice, bekase the comb is enchanted," he says. "If that sayin' be thrue, it's the faymous lad I am from this night. I'll thravel from fair to fair, an' maybe at the ind they'll send me to parliament."

With these worruds he lifted his caubeen an' stuck the comb in the top tuft of his hair.

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Begor, he'd no sooner guv it a pull than a sour, singing feelin' begun at the bottom of his stomick, an' it rose higher an' higher. When it raiched his chist, he was just going to let a bawl out of himself, only that he caught sight of a thing ferninst him that froze the marrow in his bones.

He gasped short an' jerked the comb out of his hair, for there, not tin feet away, stood a dark shadowy woman, tall, thin, an' motionless, laning on a crutch.

"A dark shadowy woman."

During a breath or two the parsecuted hayro lost his head complately, for he never doubted but that the Banshee had changed her shuit of clothes to chase back afther him.

The first clear aymotion that rayturned to him was to fling the comb on the ground an' make a boult for it. On second thought he knew that 'twould be aisier to bate the wind in a race than to run away from the Banshee.

"Well, there's a good Tipperary man done for this time," groaned the knowledgeable man, "unless in some way I can beguile her." He was fishing in his mind for its civilist worrud, when the woman spoke up, an' Darby's heart jumped with gladness, as he raycognized the cracked woice of Sheelah McGuire, the spy for the fairies.

"The top of the avenin' to you, Darby O'Gill," says Sheelah, peering at him from undher her hood, the two eyes of her glowing like tallow candles. "Amn't I kilt with a-stonishment to see you here alone this time of the night," says the ould witch.

Now the clever man knew as well as though he had been tould when Sheelah said thim worruds that the Banshee had sent her to look for the comb, an' his heart grew bould; but he answered her polite enough, "Why, thin, luck to ye, Misthress McGuire, ma'am," he says, bowing grand. "Sure, if you're kilt with a-stonishment, amn't I sphlit with inkerdoolity to find yourself mayandherin' in this lonesome place on Halloween night."

Sheelah hobbled a step or two nearer an whuspered confaydential.

"I was wandherin' here abouts only this morning," she says, "an' I lost from me hair a goold comb—one that I've had this forty years. Did ye see such a thing as that, agra?" An' her two eyes blazed.

"Faix, I dunno," says Darby, putting his two arrums behind him. "Was it about the length of ye're hand an' the width of ye're two fingers?" he axed.

"It was," says she, thrusting out a withered paw.

"Thin I didn't find it," says the tantalizing man. "But maybe I did find somethin' summillar, only 'twasn't yours at all, but the Banshee's," he says, chuckling.

Whether the hag was intentioned to welt Darby with her staff, or whether she was only liftin' it for to make a sign of enchantment in the air, will never be known; but whatsomever she meant, the hayro doubled his fists an' squared off. At that she lowered the stick, an' broke into a shrill, cackling laugh.

"Ho ho!" she laughed, houldin' her sides, "but aren't ye the bould distinguishable man. Becourse 'tis the Banshee's comb; how well ye knew it! Be the same token I'm sint to bring it away; so make haste to give it up, for she's hiding an' waiting for me down at Chartres' mill.

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Aren't you the courageous blaggard, to grabble at her, an' thry to ketch her. Sure, such a thing never happened before since the worruld began," says Sheelah.

The idea that the Banshee was hiding an' afeared to face him was great news to the hayro. But he only tossed his head an' smiled shuparior as he made answer.

"'Tis yourself that knows well, Sheelah McGuire, ma'am," answers back the proud man, slow an' dayliberate, "that whin one does a favor for an unearthly spirit, he may daymand for pay the favors of three such wishes as the spirit has power to give. The worruld knows that. Now I'll take three good wishes, such as the Banshee can bestow, or else I'll carry the goolden comb straight to Father Cassidy. The Banshee hasn't goold nor wor'ly goods, as the sayin' is, but she has what suits me betther."

This cleverness angered the fairy woman, so she set into abuse and to frighten Darby. She bally-ragged, she browbate, she trajooced, she threatened, but 'twas no use. The bould man hildt firm, till at last she promised him the favors of the three wishes.

"First an' foremost," says he, "I'll want her never to put her spell on me or any of my kith an' kin."

"That wish she gives you, that wish she grants you, though it'll go sore agin the grain," snarled Sheelah.

"Then," says Darby, "my second wish is that the black spell be taken from Eilleen McCarthy."

Sheelah flusthered about like an angry hin. "Wouldn't something else do as well?" she says.

"I'm not here to argify," says Darby, swingin' back an' forrud on his toes.

"Bad scran to you," says Sheelah. "I'll have to go an' ask the Banshee herself about that. Don't stir from that spot till I come back."

You may believe it or not, but with that sayin' she bent the head of her crutch well forward, an' before Darby's very face she trew — savin' your presence — one leg over the stick as though it had been a horse, an' while one might say Jack Robinson the crutch riz into the air an' lifted her, an' she wint sailing out of sight.

Darby was still gaping an' gawpin' at the darkness where she disappeared whin — whisk! she was back again an' dismountin' at his side.

"The luck is with you," says she, spiteful. "That wish I give, that wish I grant you. You'll find seven crossed rushes undher McCarthy's door-step; uncross them, put them in fire or in wather, an' the spell is lifted. Be quick with the third wish, out with it!"

"I'm in a more particular hurry about that than you are," said Darby. "You must find me my briar pipe," says he.

"You Omadhaun," sneered the fairy woman, "'tis sthuck in the band of your hat, where you put it when you left your own house the night. No, no, not in front," she says, as Darby put up his hand to feel. "It's sthuck in the back. Your caubeen's twishted," she says.

Whilst Darby was standing with the comb in one hand an' the pipe in the other, smiling daylighted, the comb was snatched from his fingers, and he got a welt in the side of the head from the crutch. Looking up he saw Sheelah tunty feet in the air, headed for Chartres' mill, an' she cacklin' an' screechin' with laughter. Rubbing his sore head an' muthering unpious worruds to himself, Darby started for the new bridge.

In less than no time afther he had found the seven crossed rushes undher McCarthy's door-step, an' had flung them into the sthrame. Thin without knocking he pushed open McCarthy's door an' tiptoed quietly in.

Cormac was kneelin' beside the bed with his face buried in the pillows, as he was when Darby first saw him that night. But Eilleen was sleeping as sound as a child, with a sweet smile on her lips. Heavy pursperation beaded her forehead, showing that the faver was broke.

Without disturbing aither of them our hayro picked up the package of tay from the floor, put it on the dhresser, an' with a glad heart sthole out of the house an' closed the door softly behind him.

Turning towards Chartres' mill he lifted his hat an' bowed low. "Thank you kindly, Misthress Banshee," he says. "'Tis well for us all I found your comb this night. Public or private, I'll always say this for you, you're a woman of your worrud," he says.

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DRAWN BY LOUIS LOEB

PRINCESS MARIA DOLORES OF ZELT-NEUMINSTER

THE HEROINE OF HENRY HARLAND'S NEW NOVEL, "MY FRIEND PROSPERO"

(SEE PAGE 149)

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